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QUILLIAN LECTURES, 1905

EMORY COLLEGE

JAMES M. BUCKLEY, D.D.





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THE FUNDAMENTALS AND THEIR CONTRASTS

BY JAMES M. BUCKLEY, D.D.

THE QUILLIAN LECTURES FOR 1905

DELIVERED IN THE CHAPEL OF EMORY COLLEGE

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THE QUILLIAN LECTURESHIP.

ON June 4, 1897, the Board of Trustees of Emory College, Oxford, Ga., received a communication from the Rev. W. F. Quillian, proposing to found a lecture-ship at Emory College, to which, with a view of raising a fund of \$25,000, he made a substantial gift, which has been added to by others.

The conditions of the gift were that the lecturer should be elected by the Board of Trustees from three names nominated by the Faculty from among the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Churches in the United States; or, if desirable in the judgment of the said Board of Trustees and the income would allow, the services of Methodists from any other part of the world might be secured. The lecturer so selected shall be at liberty to choose his subject, or subjects, within the range of apologetical, doctrinal, exegetical, pastoral, and historical theology; the course of lectures to be delivered before the Faculty and students of Emory College at such time and place as the authorities of the college may designate. Provided, also, that the manuscripts of the lectures shall be the property of Emory College, and that any profits which may arise from the publication of them shall be added to this fund.

The trust having been gratefully accepted by the Board of Trustees, Bishop Charles B. Galloway, D.D.,

LL.D., was chosen lecturer for the year 1898, and March 22-27 delivered a course on "Christianity and the American Commonwealth." The second course was delivered by Bishop E. R. Hendrix, D.D., LL.D., in April, 1903, his subject being "The Personality of the Holy Spirit." The third series of lectures, delivered in March, 1905, by the Rev. J. M. Buckley, D.D., LL.D., Editor of *The Christian Advocate*, New York, constitutes this volume.

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I.

RELIGIONS AND RELIGION.



*Divergent
views of the
present age.*

I.

RELIGIONS AND RELIGION.

THE purpose of the Quillian Foundation primarily is to promote the intellectual comprehension and acceptance of the Christian religion. To fulfill this purpose, it is necessary for those who deliver the courses of lectures which it provides to discern the special need of the age and attempt to meet it. But this in performance is not as simple as it may seem in statement; for at once the question arises, What is the special intellectual and religious need of the age?

A few years ago Dr. Henry van Dyke, then pastor of the Brick Presbyterian Church in the city of New York, now professor in Princeton University, and lately Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, delivered a series of sermons, later published in a book bearing the title, "The Gospel for an Age of Doubt." Believing doubt to be peculiarly a characteristic of the present time, he prepared the discourses with the design of leading the

conscientious doubter into the green pastures and beside the still waters of Faith. But his view of the age and its need was not satisfactory to Dr. Amory H. Bradford, a distinguished Congregational pastor, and recently Moderator of the National Council of Congregational Churches, who a little later published a volume containing a series of sermons designed to meet believers who needed to be led into paths of righteousness and peace. He entitled his book "The Age of Faith."

Whatever may be true as to the special characteristic of this age respecting general doubt and faith, it is certain that from the earliest times they have coexisted in every nation.

*Mutations of
faith and
doubt.*

The sacred writings of all religions contain passages whose direct affirmation or implication cannot be explained except upon the assumption that believers were liable to temptation to doubt, and that there were many avowed skeptics and open unbelievers. The Greek and Roman classics, historical, poetical, or philosophical, abound in evidences of existing doubt expressed in many forms. The prophetic writings of the Jews, the Psalms, and especially the Book of Ecclesiastes, show that among them all fundamental prin-

ples of religion as well as the authorized documents were called in question, and in some instances the identity of the authors of reigning religions, not only among the Jews, but among the nations to which they were intimately related.

History also shows that methods of combating or dissipating doubt have frequently increased it. Consciousness of power, developing an imperious spirit, righteous indignation, aroused by attacks upon one's most precious beliefs, fear of the undermining of one's offices, honors, and emoluments, and the nobler apprehension that public and private morality would be corrupted, combined to produce a state of feeling which could discern no good in any proposition for change, and could imagine only evil, and that continually, in those who disputed the words of priests. The connection of ecclesiastical with civil governemnt, whereby each tacitly agreed to support the other, increased the tendency to extreme views and stimulated actions calculated to transform honest doubt into all-inclusive unbelief.

Also doubt, becoming total unbelief, has often abandoned itself to such excesses as to provoke

a reaction to faith. This, being strictly in harmony with human nature, has always followed, and may always be expected. Nevertheless, the public and private interests of mankind will ever cause a majority to abhor extremes. Apathy may follow the excesses of unbelief, in which case established religion may again flourish, with coexisting fanaticisms; or there may be a sudden reaction, which, while preventing some evils, may for centuries act as a brake upon the wheels of genuine progress.

Without determining whether faith or doubt predominates, I regard the present time as peculiar in that the *Fundamentals of Religion* have been openly questioned, or attenuated to nothing, in quarters where, until recently, they had not been so treated.

Portentous characteristic of present time.

Heretofore,—except where there has been a revolt from all religion,—controversies within the pale of Christianity have related to the degree of inspiration of the sacred writings, the person of Christ, metaphysical questions concerning the Trinity, subordinate points of theology with respect to the Atonement, the laws of the natural universe, including the origin of present forms and the conditions of the future life, and similar

inquiries; both parties to every controversy accepting the principles fundamental to all religion. But within a few decades these essentials have been placed in the crucible by various experimenters, who have brought forth and exhibited for the acceptance of the mind of the age, not pure crystals, but an amalgam unlike Christianity, or even the "Natural Religion" which philosophers of two centuries ago offered as a substitute for organized Christianity.

The purpose of this course of lectures is to present these fundamentals, with their contrasts. This task is undertaken in the belief that if the fundamentals can be stated with absolute clearness, and the alternatives sharply defined, the foundations of religion in general, and of Christianity in particular, will be recognized and accepted by all except "a few minds of a peculiar structure." It is self-evident that no progress can be made in such an undertaking unless there be first and always a clear idea of religion and man's relation to it.

*Aim of this
course of
lectures.*

The subject of this lecture is, "Religions and Religion." The first problem is whether religion is natural to man.

The most obvious proof that man has a reli-

*Universality
of religion.*

gious nature is the fact that no tribe has been found without religion. This is now granted by practically all ethnologists. Disputes as to the fact did not involve the affirmation that any one of the great races of mankind, or even that any considerable number of tribes, however degraded, could be found without religion. But for a long time it was held that some tribes, the least developed in most respects, were devoid of such conceptions as the most rudimentary religion would require. But a closer acquaintance—an analysis of their thoughts, and especially the scientific study of their customs, dealing with their origin and meaning—has shown that they have some form of tribal government, and also some concrete conception of powers above themselves from whom they hope or whom they fear, and may displease or placate. This conception is the basal idea of all religion.

It is as natural that man should be religious, and active therein, as that he should desire property, wish to defend his rights, love his friends, and dislike or hate his foes, have pride in his country, desire to acquire knowledge, to gratify his impulses, or try to express to others his thoughts and feelings by speech, signs, or writing.

There exist many religions either wholly false, grievously oppressive, or superstitious in that they assign supernatural causes for natural effects; yet the majority of such imperfect or essentially evil religions have existed for thousands of years, and still enchain successive generations. When the multiplicity, diversity, power, and permanence of these systems are contemplated, they become an invincible demonstration of the religious nature of man. Many of them exercise absolute control over the lives and liberties of their devotees. They have controlled governments, conquered nations, and destroyed antagonistic forms of civilization. In most lands they are mightier than all political organizations.

Power of religion, past and present.

After a strange career of oppression and internal commotion, Russia is now upheld by the Russo-Greek Church, which has been able to check reform, yet without which no real and permanent reform can be made. Within the past three decades, when the antagonism of the world against the Turks was more intense than it had been for a long period, and the sultan, pressed beyond endurance, was making concession after concession, suddenly the joint hands of the Powers relaxed, and mingled wails and

howls of disappointment were heard around the globe. Numerous theories of the cause were bruited; at last, in an historic debate in the parliament of one of the great nations, it was broadly hinted by the premier that the sultan had uttered the portentous words, "I will awake the spirit of Islam." This neither England nor France nor Russia was willing to hazard. It is beyond reasonable doubt that no civil government could stand which should array itself against all religion, or against the established religions, or the prevailing religion where it has a general hold upon the people. In the most powerful period of the Roman Empire, when it included nearly a thousand nations under its sway, it was not able to compel its subjected peoples to relinquish their ancestral faiths. All were permitted to worship their own gods, after their own manner: but whoever established a new religion, if of the nobility, was to be banished; if of the common people, put to death. So long as the Roman power supposed Christianity to be a sect of the Jews, its disciples were not persecuted. But when it was perceived that the Jews were opposing it, the Roman government assuming that whatever it

might have been in the beginning it had developed into a new religion, under this law persecutions began.

Religions, whether good or bad, derive their power from the fact that all races of mankind will have religion, true or false.

The religious nature is illustrated in the inconsistencies of the worst of men, of whom comparatively few can entirely emancipate themselves from the power of religious convictions. Although men, when dominated by their passions, may exhibit brutality and an apparently innate bent to wickedness, to a degree appalling even to those not scrupulously moral nor sympathetic with religion, on other occasions they sink prostrate in penitence; and, where no motive can be assigned for hypocrisy, assume for a time the duties of the most laborious devotion. Under the Christian system, experienced priests, parsons, or ministers are never surprised by such manifestations. On the contrary, they have learned to expect that the bolder the deniers of religion, or the more blasphemous their scoffings, the sooner they may appear among earnest inquirers. Similar transitions take place under religions other than Christian.

*Inconsisten-
cies of a-
bandoned
men, sig-
nificant.*

*Human na-
ture uncon-
sciously re-
vealing its
need of a
religion.*

Close observation of those supposed to be entirely beyond the reach of personal religion frequently detects in their deeds, ways of looking at subjects, and modes of feeling, convincing evidence of the religious nature. The conscious weakness of some leads them to seek strength in the thought of supernatural power, and the success of others produces a similar effect. Men who declare that "fate" is against them, and others who, not able to account upon strictly natural principles for their own amazing success, speak of their "destiny" or their "star," are unmistakably, although unconsciously, resorting to one of the essential elements of religion in order to explain the mystery of their own careers. Those who have failed, and solace themselves with the idea that "fate" is against them, find meager consolation in the sense of irresponsibility.

While this is sometimes called a "manifestation of the religious spirit," and men who have this and nothing more are improperly characterized as "religious," they show the existence of needs and cravings which only a religion could adequately meet. Frequently late in life they have become devout and trustful; and among the most

effective defenses and impressive delineations of true religion have been the works of such as had long modified their reasonings and sought to allay their grief and to silence their misgivings by vague surmisings of impersonal powers.

All human beings are brought into the presence of death by two equally terrible facts: bereavement and the consciousness of their own inevitable approach to the unknown. In either of these minutes, hours, days, or years of soul anguish, their cry, with or without language, is to some Power which may illuminate the darkness by a sign of love; some indication of favor, or promise of deliverance. In all lands death is a more impressive teacher than any priest. As death always results from disease, violence, or old age, its constant warnings and the dreadful uncertainty which attends life create a situation in which mind and heart alike reach out into the universe for a helping hand and listen for a "still, small voice" of hope and consolation.

Religious biography, Christian or non-Christian, current or stored in the great libraries of this or other ages, affords conclusive evidence that the impression that one must die, intensified by the departure of those whose continuous ex-

*Death the
most pow-
erful reli-
gious teach-
er.*

istence seemed necessary to the happiness and to the very life of those left behind, is one of the most powerful causes of sudden reformations, and of a steady increase of devotional feeling; and of attention to the principles and the actions which the common faith or a belief wrought out for themselves invests with power of preparation for the unknown in the life which now is, and in that which is to come.

It is frequently intimated that the influence of death and bereavement in concentrating men's thoughts upon religion has practically ceased. Those who take this view are somewhat misled by the changes in public methods of appeal and in the manifestation of religious feeling. Such as are most successful in persuading men depend, not wholly upon public appeals and the influence of concourses, but upon sacred private conversations. These, and those who analyze their own thoughts and without dissipating self-scrutiny recognize the feelings which arise within them, know that the certainty of death and the uncertainty of its time, place, and manner are still among the most potent influences which draw men to the contemplation of their relation to God and to their fellow-men.

*The necessity
of a reli-
gion.*

The inability of man to account for his own existence or that of the material universe, would naturally engender in every mind capable of consecutive thought some theory, however crude, to explain the mystery; and it may be assumed that a majority of the people in any age would resort to the hypothesis of some Power greater than man. Having admitted such a view, the logical conclusion and the equally natural feeling would be that it will be wise to seek every means to secure or maintain the friendship of that Power. Hope would be sustained by such an effort; and fear would haunt him who believed in that Power but neglected to propitiate it.

Occasionally exceptions to every general order will occur. Thus there are men who testify that they never had a religious desire, fear, or hope. But they are not more numerous than those who never experience filial or paternal love, or than those from birth essentially misanthropic or criminally inclined.

Analysis will show that congenital defects, unusual environment, or physical or mental shocks in childhood, will account for such abnormal peculiarities. Pride also leads some to affirm a hardihood or destitution of religious feel-

ing which is not true to their experience. This has been confessed in later years by men once wholly insensible but who have become profoundly religious.

The evidence is complete that normal man has a nature capable of, and inclined to, religious belief; and that if it is not furnished him, he will invent it for himself.

DIVERGENT DEFINITIONS OF RELIGION.

Ancient derivations. From ancient times the derivation of the word “religion” has been disputed. The earlier view attributed its derivation to the word *relegere*, “to go through or over again in speech, reading, or thought.” Hence, according to Cicero, it meant “*to revere the gods*.” This was a figurative use; but the same word in the literal is thought by some to have been its origin, in which case it means, “to gather again, to collect; and consequently stands for *religious formulas*.” According to Lactantius and Augustine, it is derived from *religare*, “to bind back, as an obligation.” This is the prevalent view in the modern world. This difference of etymology justifies the comment of “The Century Dictionary”: “Words of religious use are especially liable to lose their

literal meaning, and to take on the aspect of sacred primitives, making it difficult to trace, or possibly to prove, their origin, meaning, or formation."

The Century's *first* definition is comprehensive: "The recognition of, and allegiance in manner of life to, a superhuman power or powers, to whom allegiance and service are regarded as justly due." This definition, however, applies only to the highest form of civilization. Under this definition, the same authority quotes from James Martineau's "A Study of Religion": "By religion I understand the belief and worship of Supreme Mind and Will directing the universe and holding moral relations with human life." It also quotes from Cardinal Newman: "By religion I mean the knowledge of God, of his Will, and of our duties to him." Another is taken from "The Faiths of the World": "Religion is the communion between a worshiping subject and a worshiped object,—communion of a man with what he believes to be a god."

The Century's *third* definition is: "Any system or faith in and worship of a divine being or beings." This signification is seen in Acts xxvi. 5, "After the most straitest sect of our religion

The Century's first and third definitions.

I lived a Pharisee"; Galatians i. 13, "Conversation in time past in the Jews' religion"; Galatians i. 14, "Profited in the Jews' religion."

Why definitions diverge.

For a long period prior to the middle of the last century, the definitions given of religion were chiefly based upon Christianity, and often limited to the view point of the originator of the definition. Professor Edmund Buckley, of the University of Chicago, emphasizes in the *Encyclopædia Americana*, the difference by stating that definitions "vary according to whether they recognize the lowest and highest forms of religion, or exclude the former." A definition which includes all must be one of this type: "Religion is the belief in and worship of supersensuous and superhuman beings." In that definition the term "supersensuous" denotes both personified nature powers and dead human souls. "This belief in and worship of a supersensuous and superhuman being," that is, a god, "whether it were tree god, storm god, or sole god, became, when defined and established, a creed and a cult, the latter being worshiped by offering, prayer, dance, and like ceremonies."

According to the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Vol. VIII., page 623), the ethnological definition

*Definitions in
the Ency-
clopaedia
Britannica.*

of religion is this: "Religion is the feeling which falls upon man in the presence of the unknown." The accuracy of this definition, though presented upon high authority, is open to grave doubt. But its author makes this use of it: "Man personifies the unknown. When his mind is strongly excited, he cannot do otherwise; and that personification he seeks to propitiate." Were this definition so inclusive as to read, "Religion is a feeling which falls upon man in the presence of the unknown with sufficient force to lead him to personify the unknown, and seek to propitiate it," it might cover rudimentary religious faith and worship.

Another definition in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (Vol. VII., page 334) is this: "Religion, in general, is a relation between man and God, and it may be either natural or supernatural. Divine religion is essentially the establishment of a right relation between man and God." This seems imperfect, and confuses philosophy and religion.

Flint's definition is this: "Religion is a man's belief in a being or beings mightier than himself and inaccessible to his senses but not indifferent to his sentiments and actions, with the feelings

*A group of
definitions.*

and practices which flow from such belief." This is too exalted to include some of the lower religions, in which certain gods are not "inaccessible to the senses," and also some forms of higher religions.

The following is from Andrew Lang, in "Myth, Ritual, and Religion": Religion is "a belief in a primal being, a Maker, undying, usually moral;—without denying that a belief in spiritual beings, even if immoral, may be styled religious."

Dr. J. D. Lang wrote concerning the native races of Australia, "They have *nothing whatever* of the character of religion, or of religious observances, to distinguish them *from the beasts* that perish." Yet Dr. Lang published evidence in the same book assigning to the natives belief in "Turramullun, the chief of demons, who is the author of disease, mischief, and wisdom." Commenting on this, Andrew Lang observed that a belief in a superhuman author of "disease, mischief, and wisdom" is certainly a religious belief not conspicuously held by the beasts; and in the Appendix of Dr. Lang's book, written by the Rev. Mr. Ridley, appears this conclusive evidence: "Those who have learned that God is the

name by which we speak of the Creator, say that Baiame is God." Lang maintains, and justly, that people who "believe in beings *unconditioned by time, space, or death*" are religious.

The *second* definition given by the Century is, "Healthful development and right life of the spiritual nature, as contrasted with that of the mere intellectual and social powers." And to illustrate, it takes an example of this use from the English martyr Latimer: "For religion, pure religion I say, standeth not in wearing a monk's cowl, but in righteousness, justice, and well-doing." And from Matthew Arnold this: "Religion, if we follow the intention of human thought and human language in the use of the word, is ethics heightened, enkindled, lit up by feeling; the passage from morality to religion is made when to morality is applied emotion."

*Latimer,
Matthew
Arnold,
Darwin,
and
Trench.*

Darwin defines *religious devotion* as, "A highly complex feeling, consisting of love, complete submission to an exalted and mysterious superior, a strong sense of dependence, fear, reverence, gratitude, hope for the future, and perhaps other elements." He was attempting to describe an experience apparently foreign to his nature; yet

the definition includes the essential elements of religion.

Trench remarks that “Religion [was] not, as too often now, used as equivalent for godliness; . . . it expressed the outer form and embodiment which the inward spirit of a true or a false devotion assumed.”

The list inexhaustible. There are many other definitions. The word is used for the rites and services of religion and for the practice of such rites and ceremonies; and occasionally, particularly by Shakespeare, as a sense of “obligation,” where men are urged to keep a contract “religiously”; also, it has another signification in the phrase “experimental religion.”

There is a use of the word in the New Testament which has deceived many who are ignorant of the form of rhetoric where *a part* is put for the whole, or mistaken for it, as in the passages, “Pure religion . . . is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world”; and “If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion is vain.”

The variety of significations which the word

"religion" bears is further illustrated by the fact that in current literature it is frequently applied solely to the *ecclesiastical* part of religion, or to the *doctrinal* part, or to the *emotional* quality as distinguished from the *devotional*; while by others still it is made equivalent to devotion.

One noted writer has recently defined religion as "morality"; another declares him to be a thoroughly religious man who "accepts all that science reveals of the operations of nature, whether he acknowledges the personality of God or admits the existence of any transcendental being, personal or otherwise."

A recent writer claims to have tabulated *eleven hundred* definitions of religion. John Morley, the unequaled contemporary essayist, has said: "To hurry to define is rash. If we want a platitude, there is nothing like a definition. Perhaps most definitions hang between platitude and paradox. There are said to be *ten thousand* definitions of religion. Poetry may count almost as many, and liberty or happiness hardly fewer."

The foregoing have been selected as types of the more prevalent definitions. But recently many of them have been modified, reconstructed,

or remanded to the ever-swelling lists of the obsolescent or the obsolete.

THE "SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF RELIGION."

The scientific study of religion, technically a modern process, is important, but like the scientific study of life leads to an unfathomable abyss. It is assumed to be certain that had there been no revelation to primitive man, some form of religion would have been invented, and that at first it would have been taught by symbols and myths; for "nature would have furnished the occasion for nature worship, and man himself for ancestry worship." Abundant evidence exists that nothing which man could not understand, but which was supposed to be more powerful than he, has failed to receive worship from him.

*Analogy be-
tween civil
and ecclesi-
astical de-
velopments.*

Religion, except in the least civilized tribes, cannot long exist without being wrought into some form or system. It has been emphasized by various writers that in this respect the progress of religion is similar to that of civil government, which always develops a ruling class. But a ruling class is invariably based on "inheritance, conquest, or some form of voluntary choice." If the fruits of conquest remain be-

yond the lives of the conquerors, to perpetuate the depository of power, it becomes hereditary. Hence it may be affirmed that hereditary or elective rulers exist everywhere, and this is true of all organized religions. Unless such rulers possessed infinite perfections, among them would spring up men dominated by the generic passions of love of dominion, wealth, ostentation, and the desire for recognition of their superiority, to be exhibited in deference, submission, and in ceremonies which in process of time, under these conditions, introduced many things not essential to religion; and some hostile to it would appear necessary for the control of the organization and the maintenance of artificial rights. Thus the nonessential would assume proportions of unreal magnitude and obscure or dwarf the essential.

Rites and ceremonies would be increased and become more elaborate, a degree of subjection fatal to self-respect be required, and by hyperconscientious or sensitive votaries be cultivated.

It was long ago learned by experience and observation (and is in effect recorded in various languages and expressed in proverbs, occasionally in the quintessence of satire, usually with the

symbols of the shepherd fleecing the sheep) that the material possessions of devotees would be considered the lawful prey of the hierarchy; and the people would be led to contribute them as a means of penance, and through penance as a means of salvation.

As it is impossible infallibly to read the human heart, it would be easy without suspicion of their motives for priests or rulers, civil or ecclesiastical, to introduce into religion requirements *primarily* intended for the aggrandizement of officials. Those who submit to them, not being able to discern this sinister purpose, would make every effort to comply, under the belief that the action is necessary to their salvation, or the only means of relieving them from some threatened suffering.

*Relation of
false relig-
ions to re-
ligion.*

On this subject it is admirably said by Sabatier: "It is not the pious fraud that produces the religion; it is the religion that gives occasion and opportunity to pious frauds. Without religion there would have been no pious frauds. When I hear it said, 'Priests made religion,' I simply ask, 'And who, pray, made the priests?' In order to create a priesthood, and in order that that invention might find general acceptance

with the people that were to be subject to it, must there not have been already in the hearts of men religious sentiments that would clothe the institution with a sacred character? The terms must be reversed: it is not priesthood that explains religion, but religion that explains priesthood."

According to Professor Buckley, in the article *Summary of principles.* before mentioned, "No religion is *false* and none *reducible to the other*." To the second member of that statement no objection can be adduced, but the former, unless qualified, cannot be correct. That every religion may contain some truth is not only possible, but probable; and therefore it may be said that "no religion is [wholly] false," but many religions are self-contradictory. It is self-evident that any religion which contradicts the truth or itself is false in its teachings upon the proposition wherein it contradicts the truth, and on one side or the other wherein it contradicts itself.

Under all religions the mass of mankind have believed in some form of future life, although not all have believed in immortality. Among the hypotheses elucidated by the scientific study of religion is this: myths were invented to satisfy

the mind of the truth of what was real in its consciousness. These ideas can be found by analyzing any religion capable of being systematized. In some less is made of the future life than in others; and a vast difference of view is apparent with respect to the mode of life after death. But the supremacy of the gods, and the chastisements they inflict, either as purifications or punishments, are emphasized.

The consciousness of freedom is at the basis of penalties and rewards. If an object of worship be accepted, the duty of worship is self-evident.

*Comprehen-
sive defini-
tion of reli-
gion.*

The legitimate inference from these considerations is that religion consists in a recognition of Powers beyond and above man, that is, supernatural; that these Powers created man, and uphold the present system of things; that they are to be worshiped and obeyed; that man is free to worship and obey or not to do so, and therefore is subject to punishment if he displeases, and sure of reward if he pleases, his god or gods, both in this life and hereafter.

In this sense, and in no other, can it be truly said that the "essentials of all religions are the same."

The distinctions among religions, therefore,

relate to the number of supernatural Powers, to the modes of worship supposed to be acceptable to the god or gods, to the laws which are acknowledged as coming from supernatural sources, the conditions of forgiveness, the number and character of intercessors, the duties, privileges, and effects of prayer, the conception of supernatural control, the existence of sacred books, the use or non-use of idols, and the destiny of man after death.

Distinctions among religions.

But in some religions essentials are so compounded with baseless conceptions and degrading practices that their influence is directly corrupting, or so antagonistic to virtue that votaries are little benefited by devotion.

When "religions" are referred to, the word signifies the essentials of the various systems of worship and service of supernatural beings or a supernatural being which are to be compared or contrasted. But unless these systems, or one of them, is meant, the word "religion" is intended to signify *not* primarily a profession, an inheritance, a racial connection, an observance of traditional customs, or an intellectual belief, but the union of feeling with conviction and a life consistent with both.

How the words "religions" and "religion" are used in these lectures.



II.

NO GOD.



II.

NO GOD.

NOTWITHSTANDING the fact that a majority of mankind have believed in the existence of many gods, or of one, there have always been those who doubted, and a number large in the aggregate who affirmed their disbelief in the existence of supernatural beings, finite or infinite. To them the universe is a machine of which man is merely a part. Among the populations of the ancient world there were always atheists, and the writings of some of the most distinguished have descended to our own times; others have been mentioned and quoted in religious or philosophical controversy.

ATHEISM.

Few words have been more variously applied than “atheism”; yet there is substantial agreement in the proposition that it has always been applied to the denial of the popular conception of God. In Greece “atheist” meant “one who denied the gods, more particularly those recog-

*Varieties of
meaning
of the term
atheist.*

nized by the state." It was on this ground that Socrates was charged with being an atheist. Pagans called Christians "atheists" as a term of reproach, because they denied the heathen gods and despised the services in the temples. The word was popularly used much as was "infidel" in England and in the United States a hundred years ago.

*Bacon on
atheism.*

Thomas Paine was popularly called "an atheist," whereas at all times he avowed his belief in one God. In his sixteenth essay Lord Bacon recognizes the fact that all who impugn the received religion or superstition are by the adverse party branded with the name "atheists." In his essay "Of Atheism" he gives as its causes: "Divisions in religion, if there be many; for any one main division addeth zeal to both sides; but many divisions introduce atheism. Another is, scandal of priests; . . . a third is, custom of profane scoffing in holy matters; which doth by little and little deface the reverence of religion. And lastly, learned times, specially with peace and prosperity; for troubles and adversities do more bow men's minds to religion." However much we may differ from an established religion, no one who professes to believe in a personal,

self-conscious, spiritual God can rightly be described as "atheist." Yet honest men of a practical turn, speculating upon the being of God, may be embarrassed by the present scheme of things. From reason and a study of the material universe, they cannot demonstrate a future state beyond doubt. They find the human body to depend for its continued existence upon the change of particles, and in course of time the spring of that change gradually grows weak, after which the most scrupulous attention to hygiene adds but a small fraction to the duration of human life. To prove indubitably, as other facts or theories are demonstrated by induction or deduction, the existence of an inherently immortal soul or spirit has been found impossible. The maladies to which men are subject are painful; the operation of climate in most parts of the world is such as prematurely to exhaust one's energies, and the possibility of contagion through air, earth, and water always exists. Equally disturbing is the fact that the strongest instincts of mankind are often contradicted by the disregard manifested by Nature, which after making promises to parents breaks them by ruthlessly destroying their offspring, or re-

*Temptations
to atheism.*

moves by similar means, frequently after excruciating suffering, the head of the family, and leaves the widow and the fatherless to irremediable mental and physical anguish.

Throughout the course of human history earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and tidal waves have made no distinction between virtue and vice; and while in the heart there is a longing for life, there is also in the mind of man the knowledge that he must die. The honest and conscientious are frequently found suffering the pangs of poverty throughout life, while those who oppress them live in luxury and are honored in death.

In the absence of a supernatural revelation accepted as such, which assures the doubter of the being of God and insures adequate compensation for all evils not caused by personal transgression of moral law, such facts will tempt many to deny that this world is governed by a merciful Providence.

*Natural
"compensa-
tion" a
fancy.*

It is the fashion of poets, and of some philosophers who should be counted among prose poets, to assume a theory of compensation demonstrable in the lives of individual sufferers. Others predicate the compensation of the race

or of the universe. Yet one scourge among others stands out with appalling distinctness, rudely denying individual compensation. It is hereditary insanity! Splendid are the asylums and hospitals for the insane. Monuments they are of civilization and philanthropy. Long before the hereditary taint was recognized of a fourth of the inmates of these institutions, their own sufferings and the miseries of their friends were often inconceivable; but when the door of hope was shut by unmistakable evidences of insanity, blasphemy seemed almost normal speech. Compensation for such hopeless helplessness is a taunt rather than a message of consolation. Yet love mocks at hygienic restriction, and through the ages, never more than now, those foredoomed to madness are brought into the world.

Another class, who rebel against conscience and will brook no restraint, in ridding themselves of a sense of responsibility find it necessary utterly to deny the being of a God.

In the aggregate there have been a large number of atheists; but it is not reasonable to believe that the major part of those who, in different ages, and especially in modern times, have avowed themselves atheists, were actually

Not all who profess to be atheists are really so.

so. One instance among many will illustrate the difference between real and imagined belief. Dr. Daniel Wise, an editor and author of much repute, was for some years a resident of Springfield, Mass. Entering a bookstore one day, he found an atheist trying to convince a number of young men that belief in a God is absurd. The man became bold, flippant, and blasphemous, and at last said, "If there is a God, I here and now relinquish all claim upon him in this world, or any other, if there is one." Dr. Wise said, "Do you really believe what you have just asserted?" "I do," was the reply. "Then of course you would not object to sign a paper to that effect?" The man hesitated, but his companions exclaimed, "If you believe it why are you afraid to sign it?" He agreed to do so. Whereupon Dr. Wise wrote down what he had declared, adding, "And because I really believe this, and am ready to take the consequences, I hereby affix my signature." Again he hesitated, but being rallied by those who had heard him, signed the paper. Dr. Wise folded it, placed it in his pocket, and left the store. After he had walked a few hundred yards, he heard the footsteps of some one gaining upon him. An instant after-

wards he was accosted and found the atheist at his side. Said the latter, "I will be much obliged if you will give me the paper I signed." "What! do you not believe what you said?" "Yes, but I think I would feel easier if that paper was not in existence." Dr. Wise surrendered it to him, adding an earnest appeal. A shrewd judge of human nature, he had long before observed that in opponents of all religion, especially deniers of the being of God, there is usually some element in head or heart which if touched will either neutralize their atheistic tendencies, or counteract their influence by causing inconsistent actions.

"As the cant and fashion" of religion exist, *A fashion of atheism.* so may exist "a cant and fashion of atheism"; and men may affirm that they believe there is no God, while by their conduct in emergencies they show that such belief is superficial. In certain periods, in order to shake the sensibilities of those who consider faith in the being of God their most precious treasure, blaspheming atheists, ever seeking to demonstrate that they do not believe in a God, have been numerous. This was the case about the time of the first French Revolution, when there was an epidemic of an-

tagonism to the very idea or name of a God. That view spread here and there in England and in the United States shortly after the Revolution. Many who called themselves deists were practically speculative atheists. Hence the uncertain use of the terms "infidel" and "atheist."

*Morley on
Voltaire.*

John Morley, in his "Life of Voltaire," says, "English deism was only a particular way of repudiating Christianity. There was as little of God in it as could well be." Voltaire's theory was that God had given every man the light of life in his own breast; that by his reason every scheme of belief must be tried, and accepted or rejected; and that the Christian scheme, being so tested, was in various ways found wanting. The formula of some book of the eighteenth century that "God created Nature, and Nature created the world," must be allowed to have reduced the atheistic conception to something like "the shadow of smoke." The English eighteenth century formula was, atheistically, nearly as void.

"France," says Morley, "carried the godless deism of the English school to its fair conclusion, and dismissed a deity, who only reigned and did not govern." "Voltaire, who carried the

English way of thinking about supernatural power into France, lived to see a band of trenchant and energetic disciples develop principles which he had planted into a system of dogmatic atheism."

Lord Bacon had such a horror of superstitions as to say, in his seventeenth essay: "Atheism leaves a man to sense and to philosophy and natural piety, to laws, to reputation. All of which may be guides to an outward, moral virtue, though religion were not. But superstition discounts all these and erecteth an absolute monarchy in the minds of men. Therefore atheism did never perturb states; for it makes men worry of themselves as looking no further; and we see the times inclined to atheism (as the time of Augustus Cæsar) were civil times." He used this term "civil" as equivalent to tranquil.

*Lord Bacon's
erroneous
generaliza-
tion.*

But Lord Bacon had not seen the first French Revolution, nor did he represent correctly the history of atheism in Rome. Voltaire speaks of it as "having destroyed the republic," and charges "that it was factious in the time of Sully and Cæsar and slavish under Augustus and Tiberius." Atheistic nihilism, anarchism, and various forms

of socialism of which he never heard, are great perturbers of states."

*Atheism the
enemy of
mankind.*

When atheism fairly reveals itself, it transforms most of its believers into dangerous enemies of society. Devoid of faith in God, human freedom, and a future life, there is no basis for what may be called "natural piety." The temperament and the interests of man will control his action. In a regulated state of society, many atheists might confine themselves to the gratification of their predominant desires, to their own protection and that of their families, and if endowed with benevolent dispositions be good citizens. But the first French Revolution, in which an atheistic hatred of religion predominated, had no principle of self-control, and plunged into an abyss of licentiousness, brutality, and immorality.

Atheism, boldly avowed as a universal negative, carrying with it a denial of human freedom and a future state, cannot permanently prevail, even against the most absurd and superstitious form of religion. Hence as man will have a religion, it is the promoter of superstition.

The dogmatic denier of the being of a God asserts what, even if true, he could never know,

and places himself outside the court of rational discussion. He who denies that the existence of a Supreme Being can be proved may escape the name "atheist," but is left by his proposition but a step above the other. He who denies that the nature of man is capable of receiving satisfactory evidence of the being of God, by means of a combination of observations and spiritual experiences, may not be an atheist in the strict sense of the word, but he cannot be counted among *theists*. Even though he does not say, "There is no God," his position is equivalent to saying, "I have no conviction of the being of a God."

The atheistic view of the universe makes it a hopeless mystery. It affords no reasonable account of the existence of the world, of man or his moral and religious nature; and enchains him to a remorseless fate in which there is no place for personal immortality.

From this point of view the temptations to doubt the being of a God are among the strongest evidences that he exists. The inward perplexities of the soul, the yearning for an explanation—for some idea or principle which will account to us for ourselves, for the moral contradictions in our situation, the prosperity of the

*Atheism a
starless
midnight.*

unrighteous, the miseries and afflictions of the most meritorious, our innate sense of responsibility, love of life, fear of death, helplessness as the closing scene draws near,—all seek, within and without, for relief which can come only through faith in a Power without mortal limitations.

The entire contents of Chapter I. in Book XXV. of Montesquieu's "Spirit of the Laws," entitled "Of Religious Sentiment," consists of the following sentence: "The pious man and the atheist always talk of religion; the one speaks of what he loves, the other of what he fears."

PANTHEISM.

In modern usage pantheism stands for various forms of thought, one of which can properly be described as atheism. The term pantheism is frequently used by those who have one idea of its meaning, while readers of their writings find another; this ever gives rise to misunderstanding and, consequently, to endless controversies. One of the regrettable factors in this misunderstanding is that dictionaries are liable to mislead the people.

Here we have to deal with that form of

pantheism which is practically atheistic; and this is not easy, as the disputes as to whether Spinoza's view was atheistic or not sufficiently show. Lewes, in "The Biographical History of Philosophy," and also in one of the English Reviews, defended Spinoza from the charge of "spiritual atheism," and affirms that he repudiated the idea. But at the same time Lewes admits that there is "little difference between that theory of Spinoza, which makes God the one universal being, and atheism, which makes the cosmos the one universal existence."

A complex problem.

Any theory which substitutes for an absolute and self-conscious spirit a so-called "world-spirit,"—not a living, personal being, but an unconscious and abstract one,—a mere conception of ideal being as the abstract totality of all individual conceptions, is equivalent to atheism. That theory also is atheistic which asserts "that phenomena are nothing but the aggregations or modifications of the thinking mind or subject," and that thought creates not only matter, so called, but also God.

Atheistic ideas under the name of pantheism.

It may be said that pantheistic doctrines are widely different from atheism, that they start from exactly opposite premises. This is true,

yet they come to the same thing in the end. The contrast in starting point and progress has been stated thus: "The *atheist* begins with nature, perceives and recognizes the material universe, and denies that there is any God; the *pantheist* starts with the assumption of the existence of a divine being as a truth which the soul cannot deny, and maintains that he is identical with nature,—*i. e.*, denies that there is any nature except God."

*Hindoos pan-
theism and
atheism.*

The pantheism of the Hindoos has had an extraordinary effect upon modern literature and modern thought. It proceeds upon the theory that there is nothing but Brahm; the truth, the cow, the elephant, the flower, are fractions of Brahm, and the efforts made to voice this theory show, as has often been remarked, "a confusion of science and religion, at once the weakness and the strength, the glory and the shame, of the Hindoo mind."

Its representative in the Parliament of Religions at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago declared that *God*, "in the sense of a *personal Creator* of the universe, is not known in the *Vedas*," and that the highest effort of rationalistic thought in India has been to see God in the

totality of all that is. He emphatically said: "I humbly beg to differ from those who see in monotheism,—in the recognition of a personal God apart from nature,—the acme of intellectual development." However, in describing the Six Periods he shows that at some period of time every possible view has been held by the Hindoo. But he declares that just before the establishment of British rule and the peace and security that followed in its train, "the people had forgotten the ancient religion, and Hindooism had dwindled into a mass of irrational superstition, reared upon myths that were not understood. When the British came, people began to think; but the change of work was no reformation at all. The mass of superstition known as Hindooism was scattered to the winds, and atheism and skepticism ruled supreme."

In response to questions, the representative declared that "in the sense of an *extra* cosmic, *personal* creator, God is not known to the philosophy of the Hindoos." He affirmed that the world and the various beings in the world "*are not created or devised by God*"; "*whence Providence, as such, is out of the question.*"

The philosophy of numerous Greeks may al-

most with equal accuracy be described as “a system of atheistic physics or of materialistic pantheism.” Much of it differed from atheism merely in name.

*Prof. John
Dewey's
summary.*

Professor John Dewey, in treating pantheism, in the “Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology,” says that “the term [pantheism] has a wide and loose meaning, especially in controversial writings, where the *odium theologicum* attaches to it; and in this way it is used to designate almost any system which transcends current or received theism in its theory of a positive, organic relation of God to the world.” He holds that it is a matter of the nicest balance, especially in Christian theology, to keep the theory of the relation of God (as infinite) to the world (as finite) from leaning to pantheism on the one side or to deism on the other.

In tracing the different schools, Dewey declares that Hegel attempted a synthesis of ideas in opposition to each other, namely, theism and pantheism; and affirms that Hegel's system broke up into two schools, one avowedly pantheistic, as in David Strauss, who unqualifiedly rejected a personal God, and the other *atheistic*, holding that God comes to existence merely and

only in the evolution of human individuals. And he points out that Hartmann seems to make pantheism and monism the same, which identification of terms he deprecates from the point of view of clearness of thought, and places Spencer as alternating between pantheism, in his theory of an absolute unknowable force, and dualism, in his theory of the relation of mind to matter, subject, and object.

Haeckel positively says: "Atheism affirms that there are no gods or goddesses, assuming that god means a personal, extra-mundane entity. This 'godless world system' substantially agrees with the *monism* or *pantheism* of the modern scientist; it is only another expression for it, emphasizing its negative aspect, the nonexistence of any supernatural deity. In this sense Schopenhauer justly remarks, 'Pantheism is only a polite form of atheism.' The truth of pantheism lies in its destruction of a dualistic antithesis of God and the world, in its recognition that the world exists in virtue of its own inherent forces. The maxim of the pantheist, 'God and the world are one,' is merely a polite way of giving God his *congé*."

*Haeckel's
identification of pan-
theism and
atheism.*

As Haeckel, who has many more followers than theologians are willing to allow, expresses under a great array of scientific terminology what a large multitude dimly perceive, and is unquestionably an atheist in that he has no place for a preexisting, independent, personal God, it may be well to see exactly for what he stands. He teaches that the universe or the cosmos is eternal, infinite, and illimitable. Its substance, with two attributes, matter and energy, fills infinite space, and is in eternal motion, which motion runs on with a periodic change from life to death and from evolution to devolution. "Man sprang from a series of man-like apes. The earth is the mere specific sunbeam of the illimitable universe, and man a tiny grain of protoplasm in the framework of organic nature." Naturally from his angle of perception he denounces "the boundless presumption of conceited man which has misled him into making himself 'the image of God,' claiming eternal life for his ephemeral personality, and imagining that he possesses unlimited freedom of will."

Speaking of a dualistic or monistic interpretation of the cosmos, he says: "Dualism, in the widest sense, breaks up the universe into two

entirely distinct substances,—the material world and the immaterial God, who is represented to be its creator, sustainer, and ruler. Monism, on the contrary (likewise taken in its widest sense), recognizes one sole substance in the universe, which is at once ‘God and nature.’” “Body and spirit (or matter and energy) it holds to be inseparable. The extra-mundane God of dualism leads necessarily to atheism; the intra-mundane God of the monist leads to pantheism.”

The conclusion is this: Any form of pantheism which denies the personality of God is practical atheism; and any form of pantheism which will not allow that God can be conceived as existing prior to all that is included in the idea of nature, is equivalent to atheism.

POSITIVISM.

Auguste Comte was the founder of a system which still exists; its chief exponent, Frederick Harrison, being known and respected throughout the literary world.

Harrison defines the positive method of thought as one which bases life, conduct, and knowledge upon such evidence as can be referred to logical canons of proof, which would

*The positive
method of
thought.*

place all that occupies man in a homogeneous system of law. He declares that the method turns aside from hypotheses, not to be tested by any known logical canon familiar to science, and it matters not whether the hypotheses claim support from intuition, aspiration, or general plausibility. Nor will this method permit any ideal standards which profess to transcend the field of law, and thus view themselves to be lawless. This is directly in harmony with the teachings of Comte, who renounces the investigation of the origin and destination of the universe. Positivism does not deny the divine and the supernatural, but declares that they *cannot be known*.

Comte's philosophy explained by himself.

I know of few books more interesting than "The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte" as translated by Harriet Martineau, the sister of the renowned James Martineau, and of brilliant talents, she was definitely understood to be atheistic; so clearly so that a wit of the time parodied the dogmatic statement of Mohammed, by saying, "There is no God, and Harriet Martineau is his prophet." Comte delineates "the three stages of mankind: the theological, which supposes all phenomena to be produced by the immediate action of supernatural beings; the second, the meta-

physical stage, merely a modification of the first, in which, instead of supernatural beings, the mind supposes abstract forces, veritable entities, capable of producing all phenomena. And the third stage, the positive, when a man has given over the vain search after absolute notions, and the origin and destination of the universe.

The positive sciences (which should be studied in the order named) are: mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, physiology, and social physics.

Out of this, Comte expected to produce a religion of humanity, without *a personal God*, or a positive belief in *personal immortality*, or in *human freedom*, in the proper sense of the word. To this religion of humanity he expected “France to bring a philosophic and political superiority”; “England an earnest predilection for reality and utility”; “Germany a natural aptitude for system and generalization”; “Italy its genius for art”; and “Spain its familiar combined sense of personal dignity and universal brotherhood.” He seems not to have expected any particular contribution from America, as he does not so much as mention it.

Having ignored the idea of God, the “Posi-

“Positive Philosophy,” in all except a few minds of an elevated and mystical type, directly led to atheism. As he grew older, Comte felt the need of something beyond the positive sciences, and invented and systematized a species of “religion of mankind,” which should be based on science, replacing the idea of God by the conception of ideal mankind. This was contradictory to various statements in his “Positive Philosophy,” in which he stigmatized the phrase “natural religion” a monstrosity, and also denounced “natural theology,” on the reasonable ground that “religion must be essentially supernatural.”

Littré accepted the “Positive Philosophy” of Comte, in the statement: “We demand that liberty as to things that cannot be known. Positive science proposes neither to deny nor to affirm them. In a word, it does not know the unknowable, but recognizes its existence. This is the highest philosophy; to go beyond is chimerical; to go not so far is to miss the mark.”

This definition would hardly have satisfied Comte. When advanced in years, Littré became a Christian of the Roman Catholic faith.

The need of something equivalent to the idea

Comte's religion of mankind.

of God, as evinced by Comte's inventing a religion, with ceremonies analogous to those of the Catholic Church, is a strong, indirect witness of the failure of his system, notwithstanding the rejection, by many of his followers, of his religion, in which humanity is God.

Frederick Harrison now occupies the position of president of the English Positive Committee, and he accepts both the philosophy and the religion of Comte. Last year he produced an article upon the subject, in which he attempts to account for the fact that positivism has but few votaries. He believes the cause to be in the fact that it is at once a philosophy, a polity, and a religion; the three harmonized by the idea of a supreme humanity. He declares that positivism denounces the *insolent folly* of atheism and the *arid nullity* of agnosticism; and acknowledges that it is difficult to convince the religiously-minded that positivism can be "anything but a new attack upon Christianity and on theism." He quotes Comte as saying, "The atheist is the most irrational of all theologians, for he gives the least admissible answer to the insoluble problems of the universe." In this passage Comte certainly declares himself not a dogmatic

Harrison's attempted explanation of the failure of positivism.

denier of the being of God; but a God *ignored on principle* has the moral force of a God *denied*.

Positivism is what may be called a passive attack upon theism. The element which might have been expected by Comte to rally to his standard has been assimilated by a cult which, though unorganized, has attracted much attention and provoked many discussions within the last thirty-five years.

AGNOSTICISM.

The term *agnostic* was first suggested by Professor Huxley at a reception in London, in 1869. He derived it from St. Paul's mention of the altar to "the unknown God." Huxley's own account in part was this: "When I reached intellectual maturity and began to ask myself whether I was an atheist, a theist, or a pantheist; a materialist or an idealist; a Christian or a freethinker, I found that the more I learned and reflected the less ready was the answer, until at last I came to the conclusion that I had neither art nor part with any of these denominations except the last."

*Definitions of
the term.*

It is said by Flint that "agnosticism is sometimes spoken of as only another name for atheism. This should never be done." "A theist

and a Christian may be an agnostic; an atheist may not be an agnostic." But while this is true in a certain sense, there is a prevalent form of agnosticism which is equivalent to atheism.

Romanes defines agnosticism as "a state of suspended judgment with regard to theism." All it undertakes to affirm is that upon existing evidence the being of God is unknown. But he says that "it is frequently used in a widely different sense, as implying belief that the being of God is not merely now unknown, but must always remain unknowable."

Murray's whole definition of an agnostic is "one who holds that the existence of anything beyond and behind natural phenomena is unknown and (so far as can be judged) unknowable, and especially that a First Cause and an unseen world are subjects of which we know nothing."

Huxley disclaimed atheism.

The spirit of agnosticism has appeared in all ages. The modern history of it by Professor Flint, of Edinburgh, is divided into two periods, the first extending from about the beginning of the sixteenth century to about the close of the fourth decade of the eighteenth. The second

The agnostic spirit.

period begins with the commencement of Hume's philosophical career. Flint declares that "there are no traces in Hume's writings, in his correspondence, or in trustworthy accounts of him, of hostility to religion. He objected to being called a deist, and manifestly because the name implied antagonism to Christianity." (Flint's "Agnosticism," p. 157.)

Agnosticism relative to religion is described by Flint as possibly *religious*, *anti-religious*, or simply *nonreligious*. The nonreligious has no special reference to one more than to another of the ultimate objects of knowledge. Religious agnosticism denies "that we can know God, yet holds that without knowledge of him we may legitimately believe in him."

This form of agnosticism he considers damaging, believes it to be inconsistent, for it deals in a suspicious, critical, and negative manner with reason, and with faith it deals in a credulous, dogmatic, and affirmative way.

Place of religious agnosticism.

Yet it is certain that there is a place for religious agnosticism—agnosticism such as that expressed by David concerning God, when he says, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." Or St. Paul,

when he says, "Oh the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" And again when he declares, "Now we see through a glass darkly." When he says, "It is only in comparatively recent times that agnosticism has betaken itself to the flattering of science and the singling out of religion as the special object of its hostility," Flint makes a point, supported by history. Huxley thought "the existence of beings higher than man rather probable than otherwise, and the government of the universe by 'a divine syndicate' of great spiritual essences quite logical."

Of the practical effect, one of the best statements is this: "Facts or supposed facts, both of the lower and the higher life, are accepted, but all inferences deduced from these facts as to the existence of an unseen world or of beings higher than man are considered unsatisfactory and are ignored."

Analyzing the subject closely, the conclusion is inevitable that upon some earnest minds, formerly inclined to atheism, the acceptance of agnosticism may operate thus: There being an involuntary doubt concerning the existence of a

*Agnosticism's
easy drift
round to
ward athe-
ism.*

personal God and a future life for man, such minds may accept the reigning religion as valuable, sympathize with its reasonable aims and purposes, and allow the imagination to dwell upon its promises, and in a few cases upon its warnings.

But a secular or strictly scientific mind, dealing with the physical universe, imbued with a spirit of agnosticism, will pursue the same course of ignoring religion and its duties which a speculative atheist would follow, and,—if there be a tendency to self-indulgence or to any enslaving form of vice,—the influence will be exactly the same as that of atheism, or anti-theistic materialism.

*Atheism
more dan-
gerous
when un-
recognized.*

As respects the *being* of God, agnosticism strikes a blow at all religion. It may destroy at once, or, like an opiate, deaden the sensibilities.

In Germany and France the products of atheism and agnosticism, varying only in effect of temperament, are the same; and in the United States it is more difficult to interest an agnostic in any form of religion than it is a mere doubter or an outright infidel. Skeptics and infidels will frequently listen to arguments; the agnostic, having, either by original thinking or the impress

of a dogmatic assertion of many real or reputed scientists, determined that nothing can be known about God or the truth of Christianity or of any other religion, believes that the best use of his time is to devote it to practical matters. In this conclusion the atheist, the pantheist, the positivist, and the agnostic unite. They spend their lives, according to their temperament and environment, as though there were no God.

The spirit of this age is highly favorable to agnosticism. The complacent utterances of some ecclesiastics and metaphysicians, to the effect that the agnostic fever seems already to be burning out, are overconfident. This is not the case in the popular mind, and in many instances where it seems to be decreasing in the scientific mind it has only become reticent or is substituted for that form of pantheism which is equivalent to atheism.

As Browning says:

I show you doubt, to prove that faith exists.
The more of doubt, the stronger faith I say
If faith o'ercomes doubt.



III.

MANY GODS OR ONE.



III.

MANY GODS OR ONE.

ALTHOUGH the immense majority of mankind have believed in the existence of a god (or gods), yet there exists the wildest diversity of view concerning their attributes and relation to man and the world. Even among those who believe in only one god questions arise as to whether he governs, or has committed government in part or in whole to inferior though divine beings; and whether he loves, pities, and cares for man, or has little or no interest in him. In most religions, avowedly or in popular apprehension, there have been more gods than one. Generally there have been different gods in each system, to whom was accorded power to answer prayer, or to perform other functions, and who were supposed to live forever; belief in gradations of gods has also widely prevailed. According to the sacred writings of the Jews, all the nations with whom they came in contact had more gods than one, and those nations possessed images of various forms.

*Gods of the
aborigines.*

Among existing aborigines the wildest confusion exists. It is impossible to classify their religion except under a few broad and elastic principles.

The New Caledonians and the inhabitants of the Solomon Islands worship their ancestors; but they also have gods, and pray to one for the eye, and to another for the ear, and offer sacrifices to spirits of the deceased. In Tana travelers have found no idols, but the banyan is worshiped as a sacred tree and the natives venerate certain sacred stones. In various parts of New Hebrides gods are believed to be malignant beings. The inhabitants have a tradition that their islands were fished up by the gods, who afterwards created men and women. In the Friendly Islands religious belief is somewhat more developed. The higher classes are supposed to have originally come down from the abode of the gods. The Hervey Islanders have peculiar ideas of the universe and of spirits.

The harmony and discord of the Indians of North America in religious ideas and customs have furnished scientific materials to anthropologists, sentiment and imagery to poets, and problems to philosophers. Nearly every thought

which has occurred to mankind is discovered here. Many of the ideas of the Aztecs are amazing in scope, and by some are thought to demonstrate indubitably the existence of a primitive revelation. For example, buildings were erected to a deity, "*not* represented by an image," but described as "He who is *all* in *himself*." The majority of these religions are polytheistic.

Fetichism is a worship of individual objects. This word "fetich," is applied to the objects of primitive adoration, "originated with Portuguese traders and settlers who came in contact with the African population." The African conceives the object which he makes a fetich as having a consciousness and affections similar to those of the human being. Material things which are worshiped are regarded as the abodes of spirits, or "more strictly the belief is that the possession of the *thing* can procure the services of the spirit lodged within it."

Fetichism and totemism.

Fetichism exists especially among the negroes in Africa, but also among the Polynesians, the primitive inhabitants of Siberia, and the aborigines of the North and South American continents. Closely connected with fetichism is mag-

ic, and this fact has led some to deny that such worship can be regarded as a religion.

The facts which justify the describing of fetishism as a religion are such as these: In connection with such worship there are festivals, and sacrifices of oxen, swine, and other animals. Criminals, prisoners, and persons of the lowest classes are immolated sacrificially, and priests acting as mediators are reverenced and obeyed. Priests also form a separate society, with hereditary dignity, property, and privileges.

The worship of animals occurs in the same grade of development in which fetishism flourishes.

Totemism is a modern word to designate an ancient custom based on the idea that natural objects, including animals, are so related to men as to protect them or their tribes. In the science of comparative religions the worship of totems is classified as the next in order of religious advancement above fetishism, which is considered the lowest. It prevailed in Siberia, ancient Germany, and in North and South America. The early European settlers found it everywhere among the Indians, and to observe its practice by the Indians is one of the interesting experi-

ences of a visit to Alaska. Relics of totemism can be found in the early history of Israel.

Since to the mind untaught by revelation the world seems a vast scene of carnage, and collisions of mighty forces, belief in a number of gods would naturally arise.

The heavenly bodies would inspire reverence, —especially those distinguished, in the figurative speech of many nations, as the King of Day and the Queen of Night, and the most brilliant stars, as well as those so related to each other as to seem significant, such as the Dipper, the Seven Stars, the North Polar and South Polar Stars, and the Southern Cross; while comets, meteors, and eclipses of the sun and moon have ever agitated and often awed the inhabitants of the earth.

*More elev-
ated and elab-
orate sys-
tems.*

The old religion of the Semitic races (Arabs and Syrians) consisted chiefly in deifying the powers and laws of nature. The powers were regarded as distinct and independent, and occasionally, though without appearing to recognize the incompatibility of the two ideas, they considered both as manifestations of one Supreme Being. The deity was frequently regarded as male and female, the one representing the active

and the other the passive principle of nature; the one supposed to be the source of spiritual, the other of physical, life.

*Germs of
higher con-
ceptions.*

In Africa some of the aboriginal tribes make a definite distinction between the idol which they worship and that which they call "the indwelling god." The negroes of the Gold Coast are conscious, says an authority, that their offerings and worship are *not* paid to the inanimate object itself. They even recognize the fact that "the inhabiting god" frequently removes himself by leaving the object in which he ordinarily dwells and entering the body of the priest.

The Iroquois Indians of this continent believed in one supreme good spirit, the Creator, but also in "an evil spirit, his brother, who is eternal and possesses some creative power." The elaborate religion of the Peruvians was polytheistic; for though the sun was the chief god, the moon was worshiped as his sister and wife. There were two great deities, and besides the sun and these deities (one of whom was supposed to have made the sun, moon, and stars) the rainbow, the planet Venus, and many stars, fire, the earth, trees, plants, and animals were worshiped.

A remarkable similarity exists between the

ideas of peoples in the same grade of intellect and development throughout the world, as is shown by the study of the aboriginal religions of India and other parts of Asia. But the great systematized religions of the world most demand and reward attention.

ZOROASTRIANISM.

Zoroastrianism dates from 1201 B.C., when Zoroaster offered his theistic system and destroyed the primitive polytheism which he found still intrenched. He named his religion Mazda-worship, Mazda being the Parsee name for God. In the later writings of the Avesta the form most frequently met with is Ahura-Mazda.

Every follower of Zoroaster made this confession: "I confess myself a worshiper of Mazda, a follower of Zoroaster, an opponent of all *false* gods, and subject to the laws of the Lord."

The original system of Zoroaster was most exalted. He believed in one God, the Creator, the distinction between a natural and a spiritual life, also in angels and personal immortality, and the system abounded in deep religious thought. But after his death "the priests rehabilitated, though in subordinate positions, the earlier spirits, which

were considered as presiding over fire, water, earth, and all the great creations of nature.” One of the most distinguished Parsee scholars acknowledges this. Also it is true that at first Zoroastrianism did not conceive the evil spirit Ahriman to be a god, but after the founder had departed this life many of his followers so degenerated as to attribute creative power to the evil spirit and to worship him.

When about the middle of the seventh century A.D. the Arabs overthrew the Persian monarchy, many of the Parsees, rather than renounce their ancestral religion, renounced ancestral homes and removed to western India. The modern Parsees of India are the descendants of those ancient settlers. Of these Max Müller says: “Here is a religion, one of the most ancient of the world, once the state religion of the most powerful empire, driven away from its native soil, and deprived of political influence without even the prestige of a powerful or enlightened priesthood, and yet professed by a handful of exiles—men of wealth, intelligence, and moral worth in western India, with an unhesitating fervor such as is seldom to be found in larger religious communities.”

In 1891 there were ninety thousand Parsees in India, about sixty per cent. in Bombay. About nine thousand are in Persia; but, while the others are generally wealthy, these are poor.

The Parsees are highly respected, and their scholars are endeavoring to bring their religion into close harmony with the teachings of its founder.

CONFUCIANISM.

The term Confucianism does not represent a religion except in a limited degree, yet to many millions it is the nearest approach to a system of worship they possess, and it is inextricably mingled with the religions of hundreds of millions more. The honorable Pung Kwang Yu, a Confucianist, Secretary of the Chinese Legation at Washington from 1887 to 1893, and representative of the Chinese government at the World's Congress in Chicago, declared that "the ethical system of Confucius cannot be called a religion." Nevertheless he adds, "*China has a religion.*"

Confucius said, "He who has sinned against Heaven has no place to pray." The Chinese diplomat further remarks: "From the earliest times down to the present day the Chinese, as

a nation,—from the emperor, the highest dignity and authority, to the peasant, the lowest in social grade,—have always paid the highest reverence to Heaven and to spirits.” Speaking of those who live a mere animal life, Pung Kwang Yu says, If they are not sensible of their degradation, “even Heaven cannot do anything for them.”

“The Spirit who rules this universe of created things; who accomplishes all his purposes without effort; whose presence cannot be perceived by the senses of hearing and smell; who dwells ever in an atmosphere of serene majesty, is called by Confucianists *Ji*, Supreme Ruler, and not merely “shen,” spirit. “*Ji*” is the Governor of all subordinate spirits who cannot be said to be propitious or unpropitious, beneficent or maleficent.”

Dr. Legge describes Confucianism “as not antagonistic to Christianists as are Buddhism and Brahmanism. It is not atheistic like the former, nor pantheistic like the latter.” According to Confucius, the worship of Heaven should be offered by the emperor only, worshiping both for himself and for the people representatively. But “all, from the emperor down, should worship their ancestors.”

The system of Confucius seems to be a comingling of the spirit of agnosticism and positivism, except that the “wisdom of the ancients” in social duties has the place which in positivism is filled by physical science. An eminent Confucianist exclaims, “What need is there of troubling the ‘Great Lord of Eastern Mountains’ of the Taoists, the ‘Yen Lo’ of the Buddhists, and the Christ of the Christians to judge the dead after death and reward every man according to his deserts? He who does his duty has already ascended to *Heaven*, and he who allows the lust of the flesh to defile his heart and pervert the use of his senses has *already* entered into *hell*.”

BUDDHISM.

Dharmapola of Ceylon says that “when monotheism of the most crude type, from fetishism, animism, anthropomorphic deism to dualism, was rampant, and materialism from sexual Epicureanism to transcendental Nihilism was intermingled with the other notions, then Buddha appeared.

Buddhism denies that there is a Creator, although it “allows” the supreme god and minor gods of the Brahmans. Two of Buddha’s doc-

trines are, "Nothing is to be accepted on faith," "There is no personal immortality."

A distinguished representative of Buddhism, visiting this country, said of it at the World's Fair in 1893: "Some take it (Buddhism) to be polytheism, some atheism, some a system of pessimism, some idolatry."

Buddhism deifies the law of cause and effect, holding the laws of nature to be independent of the will of Buddha, and yet more independent of the will of human beings. There is "no beginning or ending of all things." It teaches that "all things both sensible and senseless have the nature of Buddha." "Pain or pleasure are experienced as the result of good or evil, and there is no Buddha or divinity who administers the consequences of good or evil."

*Divisions of
Buddhism.*

Of Buddhism there are two grand divisions in India, one primarily seeking *illumination*, and the other to attain perfection by keeping the rules of Buddha. There are thirteen sects of Buddhists in China, and twelve sects and thirty schools in Japan. In China Buddhism is "a collection of degrading superstition." In Siam it is much changed. All things are made of Rufa,

matter, and Nama, spirit. These together make Dharma, the universe.

In Japan, Buddhism has made its best presentation. Though "split up into many sects, the very difference of opinion has led to one sect's vying with another in propagandist education." This is the opinion of numerous residents and Christian travelers with whom I have conversed. But its radical defects as a religion are obvious in Japan. It belongs to the type of religion that has no place for a God having the elements of personality.

Griffis declares that at least thirty-eight millions of the population are not simply Shintoist, Confucianist, or Buddhist, but an amalgam of the three. The average Japanese learns about the gods and draws inspiration for his patriotism from Shintoism; maxims for his ethical and social life from Confucianism; and his hope of what he regards as salvation from Buddhism.

There appears to have been originally in Japan, Shamanism, which was a worship of spirits, some Shamanists believing in a god above them, and others not; and there are millions who are Shamanists without the name. Fetichism still has some hold there, and many of the inhab-

*Survival of
aboriginal
religion in
Japan.*

itants have a mythical zoölogy, a species of animism, which includes worshiping animals which do not exist; some remains of serpent worship are also found. The power of fetichism is to-day so great in Japan that of the 7,817,570 houses enumerated in the census of 1892, 7,000,000 are objects of insurance against fetichism.

The ancient religions of Greece and Rome were polytheistic. There was an especial god for each division and force of nature, for tradesmen, and even for thieves—the Roman Empire permitting all subjected nations to retain their ancient religions. At the time of Paul's residence in Athens the Athenians attempted to include all possible gods, known or unknown, making their city practically a pantheon.

From the foregoing survey certain conclusions are warranted.

*Conclusions
warranted
by this sur-
vey.*

In uneducated races or nations the stronger tendency is to more gods than one. The conception of one God might have been reached in all, except among the lowest tribes, by the strongest and most cultured minds, but would not be received by the mass of the people. In various instances where the conception of one

God had been adopted by a whole people, or a large number, they have retrograded to polytheism.

Priestly orders, although necessary, have everywhere introduced complexity and diminished simplicity of spirit, worship, and rules of life, thus dividing adherents into contending factions.

The great ancestral religions have undergone vast changes, some of them to the verge of obliteration of their distinctive features. From polytheism to monotheism and from monotheism back to polytheism is a circuit which various religions have traversed.

Those who positively affirm that the personality of a supreme god was not recognized in any of the early beliefs of China, India, or Egypt, have deceived themselves by their general theory, which requires that the conception of one God should be last in the order of development.

The presumption is strong that in a remote period not covered by ancient monuments and inscriptions the idea of one Creator was seen, if dimly, by some among various peoples. That it can be demonstrated I by no means maintain; but in that respect it resembles the hypothesis

that the human race remained without the conception for countless ages. But, if the belief in one God was anciently general in any country, there is abundant evidence, in the present condition of a large part of the world, that polytheism so modified religious conceptions as in some cases to lead to the obliteration of the idea of one God of infinite attributes, and in others, to the substitution of a nondescript, executive head without power.

ONE GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY.

Having seen how greatly perplexed has been the human race in endeavoring to account for the universe of which it is a part, it is incumbent to marshal the evidences of the being of a God, infinite in attributes—the only ETERNAL PERSON.

This hypothesis is unlike all others which the human mind can conceive or receive. Its essence is the idea of an *uncaused* Being who is the universal *Cause of all that exists* or can exist.

The Greek philosophy as interpreted, condensed into a single sentence, is: "Since the highest human intelligence discovers in nature

an intelligible object far surpassing its capacity of apprehension, the design and construction of the whole natural order must proceed from an Author of supreme and divine intelligence." This simple statement is sufficient for those who do not believe the universe itself to be eternal.

But in the stress of doubt and the pressure upon mind and heart of the calamities, contradictions, and silences of nature, many would find themselves in peril of intellectual suffocation. After floundering in the morass of doubt, I formed the habit of reading all arguments, speculations, or philosophical reflections upon the problems of existence and of the Author of the universe, especially the productions of serious men of high position in the scientific world. Of these the simplest, briefest, and most convincing was written by Professor Joseph Henry, a celebrated American scientist of the middle of the last century, and at the time of his death the head of the Smithsonian Institution. It was written under the date of April 12, 1878, to a lifelong friend, and proved to be the last important letter that he wrote; for in less than two months he was attacked by a fatal malady, and, mourned by scientists everywhere, finished a glorious career.

Joseph Henry's basis for belief in God.

“How many questions press themselves upon us! Whence come we? Whither are we going? What is our final destiny? What the object of our creation? What mysteries of unfathomable depth environ us on every side!”

But after all our speculations and attempts to grapple with the problem of the universe, the simplest conception which explains and connects the phenomena is that of the *existence of one spiritual Being*, infinite in wisdom, in power, and all divine perfections; who exists *always* and *everywhere*; who has created us with intellectual powers sufficient in some degree to comprehend his operations as they are developed in nature by what is called “science.” This Being is unchangeable, and therefore his operations are always in accordance with the same laws, the conditions being the same. Events that happened a thousand years ago will happen again a thousand years to come, provided the condition of existence is the same. Indeed, a universe *not* governed by law would be a universe without the evidence of an *intellectual director*.

In the scientific explanation of physical phenomena we assume the existence of a principle having properties *sufficient* to produce the effects

which we observe; and when the principle so assumed explains, by logical deductions, *all* the phenomena, we call it a *theory*; thus we have the *theory of light*, the *theory of electricity*, etc. There is no proof, however, of the truth of these theories except *the explanation* of the phenomena to account for which they are invented. This proof is sufficient in any case in which *every* fact is *fully* explained, and can be *predicted* when the conditions are known to be the same.

In accordance with this scientific view, on what evidence does the existence of a **CREATOR** rest? First, it is one of the truths best established by experience in my own mind that I have a thinking, willing principle within me, capable of intellectual activity and of moral feeling. Second, it is *equally* clear to me that *you* have a similar spiritual principle within yourself, since when I ask you an *intelligent* question you give me an *intellectual* answer. Third, when I examine operations of nature I find *everywhere* through them evidences of *intellectual* arrangements, of *contrivances* to reach *definite* ends, precisely as I find in the operations of *man*; and hence I infer that these *two* classes of operations are *results of similar intelligence*.

Again, in my own mind I find ideas of right and wrong, of good and evil. *These ideas, then, exist, in the universe*, and therefore form a basis of our ideas of a moral universe. Furthermore, the conceptions of good which are found among our ideas associated with evil can be attributed only to a being of *infinite perfections*, like that whom we denominate “God.”

The self-revealing power of the idea of one God.

The theory of an Uncaused Original Power agrees with the conscience which is in every man, and strengthens and unifies those faculties or tendencies to which the word “moral” can be correctly applied. It also harmonizes with the conception of a Creator both transcendent and immanent,—a God who can be conceived to be the “Great First Cause” and who is in every creature, animate and inanimate, that he has made.

In his address to the Athenians, Paul recognized this truth as having been expressed by some of the Grecian poets, who had said, “We are his offspring.” The expansion of the idea by Revelation enabled him to declare that “He is not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being.”

This hypothesis of an Uncaused Infinite Cre-

ator can be made—and it only can be made—the basis of a religion which can develop man to the *highest degree* possible to a finite nature, and render him independent of contingencies,—and of priests, except for admonition, instruction, and consolation: for God has constant access to every mind and heart which he has created. The belief in one God affords means for the solution of every problem in philosophy, and transforms genuine science into an aid to faith. All otherwise unanswerable questions concerning life, death, and the future, which perplex the human spirit, are answerable in the light of this all-inclusive principle.

The being of God, accepted as truth, explains every problem or affords satisfactory evidence that it is explicable. It accounts for the existence of man, and raises and supports the presumption that some extraordinary end was intended in his creation. Immeasurable is the difference between the intellectual operations of the thinker who has no place for God in his scheme of the universe, and those of one who makes a belief in one God his primary postulate never to be questioned or ignored.

The being of God is indeed an inscrutable mys-

tery, but it explains all other mysteries; and the hopeful mystery of an intelligent and purposeful Creator, when contrasted with the hopeless mystery of a universe without a Creator, will ever so reveal its truth to a reflecting mind and an humble heart as to seem an innate idea. For a belief in God, and it alone, makes personal immortality credible. Not only does it render it credible, but requires it to satisfy the aspirations of the soul and to justify the ways of God to the intellectual and moral beings whom he has created.

IV.
INSPIRATION AND REVELATION.

IV.

INSPIRATION AND REVELATION.

WHILE all the religions which have occupied our attention have claimed a divine origin, only three are based on the belief in *one* God and *no more*—Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism. The principal sacred writings of the Jews are comprised in the Old Testament, and those of Christianity in the Old and the New; the Roman and Greek Churches recognize a sacred character in the writings designated by Protestants as the Apocrypha. The Mohammedan religion recognizes the divine origin of the Old and the New Testaments, but its principal sacred book is the Koran, consisting of revelations alleged to have been made by God to Mohammed. Mohammed therein denies the deity of Christ, but recognizes Moses and Jesus as the greatest prophets that had appeared before himself. As the Christians deified Christ, and Mohammed did not acknowledge the claim, his rallying cry was, “There is one God, and Mohammed is his prophet.”

Since there are few Mohammedans within reach of any considerations to be herein set forth, it is unnecessary to discuss that religious system. Indeed, were any conscientious Mohammedans listening they would at once appropriate to themselves many of the arguments by which Christianity supports its special claim to supernaturally revealed information.

I.

*Need and
rational ex-
pectation of
a revela-
tion.*

When without revelation the human spirit seeks light upon the origin of the world, the purpose of the creation of man, the true standard of right and wrong, and inquires whether death be the end of life or a dark passage to another state of existence, no authorized answer can be found in Nature; no materials exist on which reason can work with complete confidence; therefore, beyond actual knowledge of visible facts, all must be conjecture.

From this view point it must appear unjust in God to create such a being as man and leave him destitute of a religion; and since he has neither the faculties nor the knowledge adequate to an all-inclusive generalization, to impose upon him the task of searching it out for

himself would be cruel and unreasonable; and all the more so since he could never be certain that his conclusions were correct.

From the assumption of the existence of God it follows that in the creation of man he had in view some end, in the accomplishment of which man was to be an instrument. But since man as a reasoning being acts under the influence of choice among possibilities, to coöperate with his Maker in achieving the purpose of his creation it is necessary that he should know His will. Also man needs an ideal which he may imitate, and to know his possible future. Experience and observation convince all men that they can improve themselves, but teach them that they can improve only in a small degree without a knowledge of God's will and his constant aid.

Hence every attribute of God demands that he reveal himself: his wisdom, that he disclose his purpose in creation; his justice, that he make known his will (for the creation of reasonable beings establishes moral relations between them and the Creator); and his love, that he may not leave his earthly children longing for what he alone can bestow, the knowledge of his fatherly care and merciful goodness.

The history and condition of those parts of the world where none but themselves suppose the inhabitants possessed of a special revelation from God confirms this representative necessity, although it throws double responsibility upon Christians to carry that revelation to them, and to account for the fact that the God and Father of the spirits of all flesh has left them for so many ages without a true revelation.

Primary object of this lecture.

To prove that the Bible is a revelation or contains a revelation of special information from God is not my primary object. I aim to show that (on the assumption that there is but one God, all powerful, all wise, everywhere present, the Creator of the universe and man, and that he is as holy and loving as he is powerful) a revelation is necessary and that it is rational to believe that there is one in the world. And, assuming this, I shall endeavor to make clear that the Bible furnishes the clearest evidences of divine origin and of fitness for the purpose of such a revelation.

My personal belief is that the Bible contains a revelation upon the fundamentals of religion; and if this be not so, none exists. Further, I believe that no special information upon reli-

gious truth has been communicated by God to the world since the sacred books of Christianity were written, and that no religious teaching which contradicts the New Testament in its distinctive principles or foundation facts is of divine authority or origin.

The exposition of the grounds of this belief is my present object.

II.

The method of God in making a revelation to man must be in accordance with man's nature. It is not sufficient to say that "God being infinite can reveal his will to man in an infinite number of ways," for he can only act upon man as *man*.

A fact generally overlooked.

On estimating the capacity of human nature by history, experience, and consciousness, I find it difficult to believe that man could receive from God definite facts other than by one of these mediums: By outward signs and symbols additional to the phenomena of the natural world; by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit given to all men; by occasional or continuous inspiration to certain men in each generation who shall communicate to others what they receive; by inspiration in a definite period to special individuals

who shall preserve and record the revelations which they receive, to be communicated to all men and to serve as a perpetual standard of moral and religious truth.

*Signs and
symbols not
adequate.*

Consider the *first* method: that of God's revealing his will and specific religious truth by outward symbols and signs, in addition to the regular order and movements of nature.

1. That many peoples have believed in the existence of such signs and symbols is a fact of history. They have seen them in comets, falling stars, meteors, eclipses, and in meteorological changes. But to instructed minds it is evident that these are but parts of the established order, and that their supposed significance is imaginary. God's power, wisdom, and sovereignty are taught in nature, and some of his moral attributes dimly discovered; but this is not a revelation.

2. Moreover, were there such symbols men could not interpret them without supernatural aid. They would be infinitely more difficult to be deciphered than the hieroglyphics of ancient Egypt. Such symbols would complicate an established order. The human mind cannot conceive it possible for God to preserve the har-

monious movements of nature and teach specific truth by additional symbols, or imagine any way by which man could distinguish the natural order from the superadded lessons of Providence. If the "divinity that shapes our ends" be no dream, such a method would be complicated with both the natural order and the providence of God.

3. The history of revelation contained in the Bible confirms the truth of these views. At certain times miracles were wrought for special purposes and the uniform order was infracted. The principles of God's administration had apparently changed, and special revelations were necessary to explain the symbols.

The force of this illustration is not destroyed by critical questionings concerning the "burning bush," the "plagues of Egypt," the "pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night," and other astonishing phenomena described in the Old Testament. If they were real occurrences, the consequences I point out follow; if mere myths or parables, as some cautiously and others flippantly say, the masterly depiction of the need of human nature under such supposed circumstances remains.

4. Were one discussing this subject in a com-

munity in the state of mind of that of the citizens of Rome when prodigies and portents were believed in, even by the greatest minds, with a few remarkable exceptions, discussions of this kind would be of weight. They are valuable here only as a part of the analysis of this subject.

Are all men inspired with divine revelations? The second method, that all men are inspired, particularly poets, orators, and philosophers, is a doctrine favored by many.

1. In a certain sense men, beasts, and all animate things may be said to be inspired. But that is not the form of inspiration which some claim for all men. The Bible teaches that all are inspired to such a degree that their intellects may be stimulated and their moral natures purified; and that regeneration is the work of the Spirit. The subject before us, however, is neither of these forms of inspiration. It is a divine revelation of special truths and facts, some unknown to mankind until revealed; and others,—though rendered probable by the study of the constitution of man and the physical universe,—without a divine confirmation, could only be subjects of doubt and debate. Did God inspire Shelley's atheistic poem of "Queen Mab," or Byron's las-

civious dreams? Has he inspired the philippics against the Bible, no less than the orations that have been uttered in its defense? Did he equally inspire the holy eloquence of Paul, Augustine, Chrysostom, and the sacrilegious compositions of Voltaire and Rousseau? Did he inspire the atheistic addresses and writings of Charles Bradlaugh and the sermons of his evangelistic brother?

2. It is easy to determine this question by introspection. Every normal man has the evidence within himself that *he* is not inspired. It is vain to reply, as did one mystic, that "men are inspired and do not know that they are." For what benefit can be derived from a revelation which the subject is not aware that he possesses?

3. Were all righteous, the doctrine of universal divine inspiration might be plausibly defended; but as they are not, it can form no stable rule. One might say, as did Mohammed and Joseph Smith, that the Holy Ghost teaches polygamy as a permanent law for the race; and every absurdity might and would be propagated, and every crime sanctioned, under pretense of divine inspiration.

*Inspiration
of select few
in each gen-
eration?*

The *third* supposition is that a few are inspired in each generation, who, without a permanent record, are to communicate to others what they receive. There are three obstacles to this method, which seem fatal.

1. It would require a constant miracle to convince the hearers of the reality of the inspiration claimed; a simple assertion would be insufficient. He who claims to have a revelation may be deceived, rhapsodical, or insane. He may be an impostor, or may have artfully mingled truth and error,—indeed, there have been those who put good for evil, and evil for good.
2. There must be a constant succession of mighty works to prove a divine commission. By frequent occurrence miracles would lose their power to convince, while the order of nature and the providence of God would be involved, at least to finite minds, in inextricable confusion. Such a claim, if permanent, would become the foundation of priestcraft, and little freedom of action be left to mankind.
3. The human memory could not retain the truth revealed. It would be forgotten or mutilated; and without priests and the working miracles, it would be impossible to disseminate the

word of God. These principles are illustrated in the history of the Jews, as well as in most forms of false religion and in distorted forms of Christianity. To maintain their authority the prophets were imbued with the power of working miracles; but the people became so accustomed to them that plagues, famine, and wars, which destroyed thousands, were required to keep them true to the God of Israel. In the Roman Catholic Church the claim of infallibility has been set up, and the pardon of sin, the relief from purgatorial flames, the power of healing diseases and working miracles, have laid the foundation of the most extraordinary institution for the consolidation and exercise of power that the world has seen.

The *fourth* method is that of revelation in a limited period to particular persons, who shall preserve a record of their revelations, to be communicated to all men and to serve as a permanent standard of moral and religious truth.

That this is the method of revelation in the Bible is apparent, except that there are two dispensations covering as many general periods, connected with each other by prophecy. The character of the two Testaments respectively

clearly distinguishes the periods. The grounds upon which the Bible is offered to the world as containing the only revelation by inspiration of God is its contents and the response of the human heart to its truths, when fairly and fervently presented.

*The inspira-
of the Bible.*

Concerning the kind and amount of the inspiration of the Bible many disputes have arisen. Some have held that inspiration extended to the dictation of every word in the original manuscripts of the Bible. Unless the present manuscripts are very unlike the originals, this would be inconsistent with the human element shown by each of the sacred writers. Some have maintained that even the translators of the Bible were infallibly guided. Others have not assumed such a literal inspiration, but have held that no error on any subject referred to, either great or small, was in the original manuscript. This no one could positively know.

Others maintain that the moral and spiritual teachings of the sacred books are infallible, but in other respects the inspired writers used their real or supposed knowledge for illustration or persuasion.

It is unnecessary to diverge from our main

theme—"The Fundamentals"—to discuss these systems, since the moral and spiritual benefits of the Christian revelation are accessible to all who believe that these sacred writings "truly express the mind and produce the word of God in the manner, and to the degree, which Divine Wisdom knew to be the need of the human race."

The key to God's method of communication to man is clearly set forth in a sentence in the Epistle to the Romans: "I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh." From the beginning to the end of the Scriptures this divine condescension is exhibited, and this principle acted upon. Various critics have recognized and elaborately proved that the whole Jewish service was "a sublime and perfect object-teaching." The language, illustration, and forms of argument employed in the Bible are such as would be most intelligible and impressive to those to whom they were presented.

Natural symbols were derived from the physical features of Palestine and surrounding countries; from the mountains and valleys, from brooks and rivers, from the swift-flowing Jordan and the silent abyss of the Dead Sea, from

*The key to
God's meth-
od in the
composition
of the Bible.*

flowers and fruits, from the beasts of the field and the forests, from the birds of the air and the fish of the sea, from the expanse of the Mediterranean and the resplendent heavens above it. Every agricultural implement, weapon of war, domestic utensil, musical instrument, and every art and trade, furnishes illustrations; as do judicial forms, military tactics, personal habits, social conventionalities, hygienic rules, and medical prescriptions. Natural phenomena are employed to signify the Spirit of God and the spirit of man, and upon the words "death" and "life" were superimposed meanings other than and remote from their literal significations.

Each Bible writer retained his individuality. Thus every type of man is represented. Those who are most impressed by argumentation find many examples of it. Those reached through the imagination, the large class whose feelings must be wrought upon in order to induce action, and the practical who act primarily with respect to self-interest or to the fitness of things, can find in the work of the different writers style and matter suited to their temperaments.

These characteristics furnish evidence that various portions of the Bible were written by

men acted upon by that form of inspiration which is bestowed upon the devout of all nations, stimulating the moral faculties and the emotions; that other parts were written, in obedience to inspired direction, by men who wrote under the influence solely of their natural faculties; but that vital revelations concerning the mind of God were so controlled that no error affecting their substance could creep into the communication as made to mankind. The whole presents to the world God's eternal truth with "substantial unity" and "circumstantial variety."

In exhibiting the incomparable advantages of this method, I emphasize—

First. Its clear exhibition of the human element, demonstrating that those who bring the Divine messages have passed through all natural and spiritual experiences; born of the flesh, they were also born of the Spirit; they have endured trials, fallen and risen again; beginning in weakness, they have renewed their strength; shrinking from death, upheld by God's presence, they have died in the certain hope of a new and unending life.

*Exhibition of
the human
element.*

Second. The record of miracles, supposed by

*Value of the
record of
miracles.*

some to be an incumbrance to faith, is of incalculable value.

The revelations made by God to men were confirmed by miraculous displays of divine wisdom and power; and these, with their attendant circumstances, the moral and spiritual lessons which they taught, and the effect which they produced upon those who saw them, are described in the sacred writings. Their relation to revelation is more clearly set forth in the life of Christ and the apostles; and in many instances a clear distinction is recognizable between miracles, prodigies, and natural consequences. The miracles of the New Testament were unparalleled; they were performed at the will of an agent, and they accomplished a purpose worthy of divine interposition.

A total eclipse of the sun is an ever-astonishing display of God's wisdom and power; but it is not a miracle, for it occurs in the established order of antecedents and consequents. To the ignorant the natural often seems to be miraculous. In the early ages, when men did not observe nature, almost every natural process was supposed to be miraculous. Hence the gods of mythology were countless, and priestcraft flourished.

The feeding of five thousand by Christ, the giving, without natural means, of sight to the man born blind, the depositing and finding of the piece of money in the mouth of the fish, the instantaneous control of the winds and the waves, the raising of the dead, all illustrate and require a definition of a true miracle as an event involving the setting aside and contradiction of the established and uniform laws of antecedents and consequents; such events being produced at the will of an agent, not in the way of physical cause and effect.

The purpose of the miracles was to demonstrate that God speaks, and the purpose and the effect were expressed in the words of Nicodemus, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, *except God be with him.*" They proved to many that Christ was a "teacher come from God," and his doctrines and words were heard and received on authority, and were not subject to the mutations attending individual opinion.

It was necessary, not only that miracles should be wrought, but that they should be so extraordinary as to overcome belief in all forms of won-

der-working wrought by pagans, and to negative the use made by the high priest and the Pharisees of the older record of miracles, which they claimed to be witnesses to their perverted views of the former dispensation, and also to overcome the universal skepticism of the Sadducees. The performance of miracles was the only way by which Christ could, instantly, overcome skepticism.

The history of miracles is but an account of the means by which Christianity was established in the earth. A miracle without a divine reason is inconceivable and impossible, but a miracle for such a reason is worthy of a God. When the miracles which Christ had wrought were almost lost to sight and memory in the awful gloom of the tragedy of his cross, the crowning miracles of his resurrection and ascension infused his teachings with a vitality which remains till this day.

When revelation was completed, and the seed planted had begun to take root, the further progress of Christianity was left to the Word, the Spirit, to the preaching of the gospel and to the lives of its votaries. Miracles ceased because their work was completed. That they were be-

yond nature gave them convincing power; and, after Christianity has thus obtained a hearing and its teachings are placed before men, should they not believe, "neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

Third. Next in value to the record of miracles is that of prophecy. To its evidence many of the Jews submitted when miracles alone would not have removed their mistaken view of the Messiah that "was to come." They believed Moses and the prophets, and felt that he who wrought such wondrous miracles must know the true meaning and proper application of the passages upon which he based his claims to be the Messiah of whom Moses and the prophets did speak. It was by the record of prophecy that after his resurrection he encouraged his disconsolate disciples when he "talked with them by the way and opened to them the Scriptures," "beginning at Moses and all the prophets," showing them that, according to prophecy, Christ "ought to have suffered these things and to have entered into his glory."

Fourth. The biographies of good and bad men, with their moral lessons, could not have been transmitted to future ages by any other

*The records
of prophecy
and fulfill-
ment*

*Biographies
of good and
bad men.*

agency. Every possible variety of human nature is there delineated with inimitable skill, and the knowledge thereof thus disseminated is a permanent intellectual and social guide which cannot be overestimated.

*Inestimable
worth of
many books.*

Fifth. In what terms of value shall the worth of the books of Job, Psalms, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel be stated? Religion and literature would alike suffer by their loss. Independent of great basal truths, the maxims, aphorisms, and proverbs of prudence and morality scattered through the books of the Bible, helpful in the regulation of life and the determination of ever-recurring points of practice, could not have been preserved had they not been incorporated in the records of that people to whom the oracles of God were committed.

*Account of
progressive
revelations.*

Sixth. The history of the progressive revelations made by God to man and of his providential dealings with men and nations fills what would otherwise be a dark void in the religious condition and growth of the world. It conducts the reader to the period when the race of man was in its infancy. He looks with pity upon the patriarchs groping in the starlight; he follows them until the moonlight of the Mosaic dispensa-

tion enlarges their views, relieves many of their difficulties, and furnishes them with minute rules of living, all designed to preserve their segregation till their work was done, to impress them with the holiness of God and a devout hatred of idolatry, and to prepare them to discern "the True Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." After tracing such a gradual unfolding, he recognizes the culmination of revelation in the appearance, life, character, suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.

Seventh. The record in manuscript originally, and in printed book in later times, has made possible the presentation of the internal evidence which supplies the place of inaccessible oral witnesses. It is the best evidence possible in any case after the original witnesses and those who knew them have died.

The same conditions admit of its translation into various languages, which has wonderfully (and never so much as now) aided in the dissemination of the truths which it contains and the accomplishment of the purpose of divine revelation.

Eighth. From the fact that the revelation of

*Dissemina-
tion by
publication
and trans-
lation.*

Permanent standard of moral and religious truth.

God is recorded, it becomes a *permanent standard of moral and religious truth*, which can be examined, appealed to, and preserved. Whatever opinions may be held of its teachings, they are in the text, and there they will remain forever. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." And so cogent and luminous are the doctrines of the Bible with respect to the essentials of religious faith and the distinctions of morals, that there has been comparatively little divergence as to what is taught in the Bible. True believers are interested to preserve it from material errors. Upon the whole the divergences of sects have been favorable to its preservation, for "mutual jealousy will prevent the variations of the text or the interpolation of error"; while the hundreds of passages quoted from it by its ancient enemies and preserved in their writings are strong corroborations of its authenticity.

Admits of study and use in private devotion.

Ninth. In this form *the revelation of God admits* of being studied, employed in private devotion, as a text-book in the house of God, and in the instruction of youth.

The *special promises contained in the Bible*,—to the poor, the persecuted, the friendless, to the penitent prodigal, to those who are bowed be-

neath the weight of grief, to parents, children, the widow and the fatherless, to the sick and the dying,—are “exceeding great and precious,” and are distributed throughout the Holy Book so profusely and in so many different forms of statement that the most highly instructed and spiritually-minded Christian or the weakest believer may find what is exactly adapted to his receptivity and deepest need.

Tenth. By this means believers may escape the domination of priesthood and the subtle deceptions of superstition. “If they speak not according to his word, there is no light in them.” That by some the Bible itself has been made a fetich, is evidence only that every instrument of knowledge or piety may be perverted to base or pernicious uses. He who understands that only those parts of the Old Testament which agree with the spirit and teachings of the New are binding upon the Christian, will not blindly surrender his judgment or fall into “divers superstitions.”

Eleventh. The indispensable and imperishable contents of the Bible are its moral and spiritual teachings and its divine promises culminating in assurance of immortal life.

*Protection
against
the twin
monsters
priestcraft
and super-
stition.*

*Preserves the
portraiture
of the life
and charac-
ter of Jesus.*

The portraiture of the life and character of Jesus Christ could not have been preserved unmutilated in the memory of mankind without a perpetual miracle. Divergent views thereof are not unknown, and without the indestructible record they would have become innumerable long before the present century, and the image of God in Christ would have been blurred or obliterated from human memory. When no church is accessible and no "father confessor," pastor, or Christian brother is near, when darkness and despondency increase, the Holy Book is more than a talisman; it is the bread of life; for it contains the words of Him who said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

The best statement in the English language of the necessity of more than a belief in God is by John Morley, who perceives the value of that which perhaps he does not possess. It is from a passage in his "Life of Voltaire," wherein he pictures the failure of deism. "The common people are wont to crave a revelation, or else they find atheism a rather better synthesis than any other. They either cling to the miraculously transmitted message with its hopes of recompense, and its daily communication of the divine

voice in prayer or sacrament, or else they make a world which moves through space as a black monstrous ship with no steersman. The bare deistic idea of a being endowed at once with sovereign power and sovereign clemency, with might that cannot be resisted and justice that cannot be impugned, who loves man with infinite tenderness, yet sends him no word of comfort and gives him no way of deliverance, is too hard a thing for those who have to endure the hardships of the brutes, but yet preserve the intelligence of men." Not less hard is the burden upon those who cannot be classed among the "common people," if they are without God and hope in the world.

Yet, whether learned or ignorant, rich or poor, honored or unknown, the words of life are provided for all who sympathize with the spirit of John Greenleaf Whittier:

We search the world for truth, we cull,
The good, the pure, the beautiful,
From graven stone and written scroll,
From the old flower-fields of the soul,
And, weary seekers for the best,
We come back laden from our quest,
To find that all the sages said
Is in the book our mother read.

V.

FALSE AND DISTORTED FORMS OF
CHRISTIANITY.

V.

FALSE AND DISTORTED FORMS OF CHRISTIANITY.

AMONG the most striking features of the New Testament are predictions of the rise of false prophets, false apostles, and false Christs.

“Beware of false prophets,” said Christ in the Sermon on the Mount; and terrifying is the passage in which he declares that he will not recognize many who have prophesied in his name, and in his name done wonderful works. Toward the close of his life he declared, “Many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.” “For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” “For many shall come in my name, saying, I AM CHRIST; and shall deceive many.”

*Rise of false
teachers
prophesied.*

Paul writes: “The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits.” . . . “Speaking lies in hypocrisy.” Also, “For such

are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ."

Peter, in the Second Epistle, speaks of false prophets and describes their punishment. John, in the First Epistle, affirms that "many false prophets are gone out into the world," and, in the Book of Revelation, commends the Church at Ephesus for trying those "which say they are apostles, and are not." It was with reference to such that Jude exhorted Christians that they "should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

False Messiahs in the early centuries.

Christ's predictions of the coming of false Messiahs were fulfilled among the Jews at intervals for centuries.¹ Among the first was Simeon, a bandit, who preyed upon Romans in Palestine, finally proclaimed himself the Messiah, and was "elected King of the Jews." He assumed the

¹The authorities for the ancient instances here adduced are general and ecclesiastical history and biography, but I am particularly indebted for facts concerning certain "false Messiahs" to an elaborate article on the subject by Professor James H. Worman, in McClintock and Strong's Cyclopædia.

name of Bar-Cocheba, thus connecting himself with the star prophesied by Balaam. In fact, "he pretended to be the star sent by heaven to restore his nation to its ancient liberty and glory." His enemies changed his name to Bar-Coxeba, which means *son of a lie*. He raised and organized an army, coined money and inscribed his name upon it, sent a forerunner (analogous to John the Baptist) to proclaim him Messiah, and took Jerusalem 132 A.D. The Emperor Hadrian sent an army against him, under Julius Severus, which caused him to take refuge in Bither, which was besieged, the slaughter there and elsewhere being enormous. During this rebellion and for three years afterwards Judea was desolated and five hundred and eighty thousand Jews were slain by the Romans.

In the siege of Bither, Bar-Cocheba, alias Coxeba, was killed. In the island of Crete arose, in 434 A.D., an individual called Moses Cretensis. He drew a multitude after him by the pretense that he was a second Moses, and his fanaticism increased until he commanded his followers, in order to accompany him to Mount Zion, to plunge from a rock into the sea. Many leaped, but when the others saw them drown the multitude drew

back and scattered. They sought for "Moses," but he had incontinently fled.

In the reign of Justinian, about 529 A.D., the Jews and Samaritans rebelled against him, and acclaimed a certain Julian king and the long-looked-for Messiah. The emperor dispatched an army against him, which prevailed, and, as in the case of Bar-Cocheba, thousands were killed. The "Messiah" was taken prisoner and executed.

About 721, in Spain, a man named Serenus announced himself to be the Messiah; multitudes followed him, but "their hopes and his claims came to naught."

*Many false
Messiahs in
the twelfth
century.*

In the twelfth century no less than twelve Messiahs appeared, and several countries were vexed with them. One in France (about 1137) was killed, as were many adherents. The next year the Persians were afflicted with a similar claim put forward by a Jew, who played the rôle the expectation of which had caused the Pharisees to reject Christ, namely, that the Messiah was to lead an army and achieve independence for the Jews from all other powers. He raised a large army, but fanaticism quailed before disciplined armies and systematic war. He was slain, and probably no body of insurgents was ever treated with more cruelty.

About twenty years later excitement prevailed in Spain, caused by a Jew who demanded allegiance to his Messiahship. His conduct was so extraordinary that some supposed him to be insane. But, as is frequently the case, the very deeds that led the judicious to believe him distraught only strengthened his cause with the populace. It led the fanatical, the imaginative, the superstitious to believe in him the more strongly, and the lovers of turbulence to follow him more willingly; but "the great body of the Jewish nation believed in him." Under his leadership almost all the Jews in Spain were extirpated.

The astonishing history of false Messiahs presents one semi-ludicrous phase. In 1167 a Messiah appeared in Arabia, who professed to work miracles and attracted many followers. As soon as the attention of the authorities was directed to the rapidly spreading movement, search was made for the "Messiah." He was captured, but his followers fled. When brought before the Arabian king he was questioned as to his claims, and replied that he was a "prophet sent from God." He was so confident either in his own claims or in his power to impose upon the king, that when asked what sign he could show to

A semi-ludicrous phase.

confirm his mission, he answered, "Cut off my head and I will return to life again." The king, promising to believe in his mission if he returned, took him at his word and ordered him decapitated. This effectual checking of his ambition dispersed his followers.

In the same year, in the kingdom of Fez, David Alrui, another false prophet arose. He involved all the Jews in that country in persecution and every form of trouble.

The next in order was a Jewish "Messiah" dwelling beyond the Euphrates, who was followed, as had been his predecessors, by vast multitudes. He claimed to have been leprous, and to have been cured in one night. He was, however, put to death; and his countrymen, whether or not they believed in his claims, were cruelly persecuted.

In 1174 a second Persian pretender arose. He sought to influence the common people. Though many would not believe, their protests brought no exemption from persecution. Two years afterwards David Almasser agitated Moravia by his pretense to be the "Messiah." He scouted the idea that he could be captured, for he claimed to have the power of making himself invisible: but orders were given to take him, visible or invis-

ible. He was soon seized and put to death. At this time Jews were not killed, but a heavy fine was exacted from them.

In 1199 one of the most famous of these impostors appeared in Persia. He was known as David el-David. He already had wide reputation as a magician, and undoubtedly was a man of learning. He taught that all his predecessors were impostors or lunatics, he alone being the true Messiah. He was warlike and raised an army, rebelling against the king, but was seized and imprisoned. He succeeded in escaping, but was retaken and decapitated. Thousands of Jews who had taken his part were slaughtered.

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there were not many claimants for the Messiahship, but much time was taken up in calculation of the time of the actual coming of the Messiah. Several rabbis had agreed upon 1358 as the year; but, strange to say, no one took advantage of the prediction to offer himself as its fulfillment, and toward the close of the fifteenth century in Spain and Portugal the situation of the Jews became worse than it had been for ages. The Catholics determined to convert them, and under the pressure of fear two hundred thousand Jews

False Messiahs in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries.

submitted to baptism. Under these circumstances a Jew of high renown endeavored to reanimate the hopes of his people, and fixed upon the year 1503 as the date of their deliverance. A German rabbi, resident within the Austrian dominions, appeared as the forerunner in 1502. He called the people to remove to the East, tore down his house and declared that all who followed him should live in peace under the reign of the "King of the Jews." Many prepared to follow him, but his sudden death put an end to his schemes.

In the reign of Charles V. a man calling himself David Reubeni secured audience of the King of Portugal. He represented that he had come from India as ambassador of his brother, "the King of the Jews," to propose an alliance for the recovery of the Holy Land from the Mussulman. He brought papers, and found favor with Pope Clement VII., receiving distinguished treatment from the papal court. With him affiliated Solomon Molcho, a Portuguese Christian, who "openly apostatized to Judaism." He traveled for a time with David, but wishing to see the Holy Land departed for the East. On his return he visited the pope, who showed him more favor

than David had received. When he and David met they went to the seat of Charles V. to convert him, but the king threw them into prison as heretics and dangerous. David escaped, but Solomon was burned at the stake.

In 1615 a false Christ arose in the East Indies and was followed by Portuguese Jews, who were numerous there. Another appeared in Europe in 1624, who promised to destroy Rome, overthrow the kingdom of Antichrist and the Turkish Empire. Sabathai Zebi, the greatest of the Jewish pretenders, arrived in 1666. He forsook the Jews and became a Mohammedan, but was finally beheaded. Nevertheless, he had already formed a sect which exists to this day.

In the latter part of the seventeenth century there were several others, and they continue to arise. One appeared in Germany in 1872, and another is now operating in India.

Wishing to separate from other Christians in order to "unite Moses and Christ," a large number of Jewish Christians divided into two classes, one of which derived its name from Ebion and deserves special notice. He taught that Christ was the son of Joseph as well as Mary. He observed the rites of Moses, and also the supersti-

*"False
Christs" in
the seven-
teenth cen-
tury.*

*Distorted
forms of
Christianity
in the ear-
liest centu-
ries.*

tious ceremonies of the ancestors of the Jews. One of the many sects which early sprang up, originating in Asia, maintained the philosophy of the East in regard to the origin of the universe; and another, founded among the Egyptians, while holding that philosophy, added to it various "monstrosities, opinions, and principles current in Egypt."

These were the forerunners of the Gnostics, whose rapid spread threatened to cost the Christian Church its life. Some of the sects became exceedingly corrupt: Rome was the center of several comprehended under the general name of Gnostics. The united forces of Christians and Platonic philosophers,—at one on several vital points,—caused Gnostics to lose their influence.

Then Manes, a Persian, established a system which was a compound of Christianity and the ancient philosophy of the Persians. He took the ground that the God of the Israelites was the "prince of darkness," and souls which believed Jesus Christ to be the Son of God should and did cease from worshiping him.

In the latter part of the third century another sect appeared, whose principles forbade marriage,

the eating of flesh, and whatever was gratifying to the senses. Its founder denied the resurrection of the body, and excluded from heaven infants who died before they could reason, on the ground that they had not earned it by victorious conflict.

The most famous originator of new doctrines was Sabellius, who diverged from orthodox believers with respect to the Trinity. The fourth century brought on a terrible contest between Arius and Alexander,—the occasion primarily of the convening of the Council of Nice. The decision was against Arius, whose followers might still have been a mighty power and have modified the doctrines of the Christian Church, had they not split into numerous sects hating each other. This division caused the formation of the much controverted Athanasian creed.

*Sabellius,
Arius, and
Pelagius.*

An issue concerning the nature of Christ, raised by Pelagius, threatened to be almost as inimical to the unity, moral power, and growth of the Church as was the controversy between Arius and Alexander. Between Pelagius and the great Augustine was carried on a controversy of far-extending consequences.

The sixth century was notable because of the

rise of a sect called the Tri-theists, as they made the Trinity to consist of three gods; this sect also divided into two.

*From the
sixth to the
twelfth cen-
tury.*

The next century was perplexed by controversies as to whether there be one or two *wills* in the person of Christ. In the eighth century Adalbert, a Frenchman,—consecrated a bishop against the will of Boniface,—brought forward an epistle which he asserted was written by Jesus Christ and brought down from heaven by Michael, the archangel. Another theory about this epistle is that “it fell down at Jerusalem, and was found by the archangel Michael; that a priest transcribed it and sent it to another priest, who took it into Arabia; and, finally, that after passing through many hands it reached Rome. Various other false statements were proved against Adalbert.

The tenth century inflicted vast evils upon Christianity without developing many new sects. This was the period when, because of the great number of canonized and beatified saints, new festal days, forms of worship, and religious rites were imposed upon the people. The eleventh century was not notable for new heresies; the twelfth, however, was a period of fermentation,

the germs of the final separation of multitudes from the Roman Catholic Church being in solution. Most of those who desired to reform the prevailing religion did not understand the Bible, and historians agree that they were "as far from the religion of Christ as taught in the New Testament, as from Roman Catholicism." This century, however, was marked by the rise of a genuine reformation, in which was born the sect of the Waldenses, who endured severe persecutions for centuries, but still exist. About this time the most singular religious fanaticism appeared. A man named Eon of Bretagne, having heard pronounced these words, "*Per Eum* by him who will come to judge the quick and the dead," concluded that *he* was the one who was to judge the quick and the dead. This mild lunatic died in prison. He is described as a wealthy nobleman of pleasing address, who drew a great number after him; and with these he traveled rapidly and with display over the country. Many of his followers were excommunicated as heretics and burned at the stake, according to the custom of the age.

The thirteenth century was marred by fierce and bloody conflicts. New sects arose, agreeing

The twelfth century like the iron and the clay in Nebuchadnezzar's image.

Horrors of the thirteenth century.

in the charge that Romanism was false, but disagreeing in nearly everything else. This was the century which gave birth to the inquisition; yet the more the people were persecuted the more frequently new sects appeared, some outrageously wicked and others the consummation of absurdity, some harmless and a few meritorious. One evil sect was known as the Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit. They were practically pantheists. Some of their aphorisms were: "All created objects are nothing"; "Good men will be converted unto God himself and detached from the visible universe"; "What the Scripture says of Christ is true of every godly man."

In the middle of that century multitudes were led astray, adopting abnormal and depraving doctrines. They claimed that by protracted contemplation the procreative instincts of nature might be eradicated. In their secret assemblies they discarded all raiment, and taught demoralizing practices. Some went so far as to teach that "a godlike man, or one who is closely united to God, cannot sin, do what he may." Others took the ground that "after the union of the soul with God the emotions and desires arising in it are

acts and aspirations of God himself, and, therefore, they could do anything, however criminal, because God is above all law."

In the fourteenth century the Quietists appeared, who taught that by retirement and concentration of their gaze for hours upon some part of their persons a divine light would be caused to beam forth from the mind itself. This they affirmed was "the glory of God and equivalent to the transfiguration light of Christ." The Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit secured a few learned men, undoubtedly sincere; but others of this sect, which continued many years, were impostors.

In the sixteenth century the great Reformation changed the whole situation to such an extent as to require the history of Christianity to be treated, not under one or two heads, but separately, under the Roman, the Greek, the Lutheran, and the Reformed Church, the Mennonites (otherwise called the Anabaptists) and the Socinians. Since that time numerous communions have arisen, some of great usefulness, others absurd and harmful.

The wild sects which have been sketched can be paralleled by the distortions and corruptions of

*The century
before the
Reforma-
tion.*

*The great
Reforma-
tion.*

true Christianity in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the United States. For the past one hundred years there has not been in the United States a decade without "false Christs" appearing, most of whom have been able to extort from their adherents sufficient funds to enable them to live in luxury, and some of them to carry on extensive enterprises and accumulate great wealth.

The Shakers. The sect of Shakers should be regarded simply as an eccentricity, its method of service and enforced celibacy being peculiarities of its founders. Immorality cannot be charged against them.

The Oneida Community and its abnormalities. The Oneida Community demands more attention. This institution was founded by John Humphrey Noyes, of good birth, his father being a representative in Congress, and his mother an aunt of one of the presidents of the United States. He studied at Dartmouth, took the theological courses at Andover and Yale, and in 1833 was licensed to preach. This license was speedily revoked, as he professed a second conversion and belief in the dual sexual nature of God. Noyes maintained several propositions, one of which is that as Christians are required to pray "Thy will be done on earth as it is in

heaven," as there is no marriage in heaven there should be no marriage on earth. He also held a doctrine of Christian perfection much like that of the doctrine of the Brothers and Sisters of the Free Spirit. He held that perfect Christians can do no wrong; that shame is caused by sin, and that the first duty of the perfect Christian is to eradicate shame. In lieu of marriage he had a community system of such peculiar nature and so contrary to the natural instincts of modesty that it must not be described. A species of stirpiculture was rigidly enforced, and the community rather than the parents trained the children. His doctrines are stated with astonishing frankness in *The Berean*. His expositions of the Scripture were marvelously ingenious, and his ability as a financier was unusual. He was a student and an autocrat. He taught that Christians should use no medicine, and that they would not die. His first settlement was at Poultney, Vermont. Another branch of the community was established at Wallingford, Conn. His communities were not composed of persons of inferior intellect exclusively, but included many much above average intelligence. There were classes in Greek, and in music, and the

musical performances were superior. They willingly explained their system, and seemed perfectly frank.

The sister of the founder informed me that in removing from Poultney, Vermont, to Oneida, some of the members were drowned in the lake, and the survivors were troubled in mind as to whether those drowned were firm in the faith, or were not genuine and thus allowed to perish. In 1875 people in central and western New York began to discuss the peculiar sexual relations of the Oneida Community, and wide opposition arose, compelling the abolition of their substitute for marriage. In financial and domestic matters the coöperative plan was employed. In 1882 the whole property of this community was valued at about six hundred thousand dollars, but since that period various manufactories have been established, and its property is now said to be worth at least two million dollars; and there are upward of three hundred persons in the community.

I know of no stronger illustration of the power of a shrewd mind to deceive itself and others by the use of the Scriptures wrested to one's own purpose, than is afforded by the career of

John H. Noyes. Licentiousness protected by a spurious holiness was the basis of his social system.

The Buchanites were the followers of Elspeth Buchan (or Simpson), a religious enthusiast in Scotland, who claimed to be "the woman in Revelation in whom the light of God was restored to men."

The sect of "Muggletonians" is an English product, founded in 1651 by Lodowick Muggleton and John Reeve, who assumed to have divine inspiration and proclaimed themselves the "two witnesses" referred to in Revelation.

Joanna Southcote, who announced herself to be the inspired woman of Revelation who was predestined to give birth to the new Messiah, attracted in England about one hundred thousand disciples. Ten days after the date which she had predicted for the birth of Shiloh, she died of dropsy; nevertheless, her disciples maintained their faith in her supernatural authority and destiny, and some of her followers believe that she will return to the earth.

Mormonism originated in 1830. Its missionaries visit every land; its power is autocratic over its devotees; its existence in eight states

Singular distortion of Christianity in England.

gives it wide political and commercial influence, and it is occupying the attention of the Senate of the United States, on which devolves the responsibility of deciding whether, without violating the principle of the non-union of Church and State, and the freedom of religion, imbedded in the Constitution of the United States, it can eject a legally elected senator from his seat in the senate on the ground that he is one of the apostles of the Church of Latter-day Saints. Mormonism professes to be a form of Christianity, and accepts the Old and the New Testaments. It also professes faith in the Book of Mormon, and believes in revelations adding to or explaining the contents of the Old and the New Testaments and the Book of Mormon.

*A bold and
bold impos-
ture.*

The Book of Mormon is undoubtedly of human origin, as are also "Revelations and Covenants." While its code of morals is austere, it soon sanctioned and practiced polygamy, and its administration was long privy to "bloody deeds and death." Many of its doctrines concerning God, its interpretations of Scripture, its views of woman, and its elaborate scheme to accomplish her salvation are intrinsically absurd. The alphabet in which its supposed divine revelation,

the Book of Mormon, was printed is an imposture of transparent character, a production of ignorant cunning.

Its history under its principal leaders, Joseph Smith, Jr., and Brigham Young, furnishes to discerning minds, whether Christian or not, abundant evidence that it could not have originated by the inspiration of God. When it built polygamy upon the imperfect development of the ancient Jewish Church, and professed to believe in Jesus Christ, who declared polygamy and free divorce to have been allowed "because of the hardness of the hearts of the people," it attempted to substitute darkness for light. Yet it had little difficulty in making converts, and still makes them in foreign lands, though it accomplishes less in the United States in proportion to the number of missionaries than any other body having any pretense to an organization.

Its method on entering a new community is to conceal its peculiar ideas, preach generally accepted Christian doctrines with earnestness and vigor, according to the intellectual capacity of its missionaries; and not until it has won for itself confidence by this method does it begin to insinuate its peculiar, and for the greater part

Its missionaries as "angels of light."

demoralizing, views of God, and the semi-pagan conditions upon which, as they maintain, an immortal life of purity and blessedness depends.

That many Mormons are conscientious and live according to their belief cannot be doubted, but that the general spirit of the whole institution is of the earth earthy is self-evident. Its existence is a demonstration that human nature undergoes no modification, and the rise in the light of Christianity of such a superstition, that might naturally have arisen in Arabia or Egypt, shows the necessity of so maintaining pure and rational Christianity as to satisfy the aspirations of all who are religiously inclined.

The phenomenon that where it exists Mormonism can make no converts among the Gentiles, and that Christians are making few converts from Mormonism, deserves profound reflection and examination. If the first is not wonderful, why does the second member of this problem exist?

The Reformed Church of the Latter-day Saints believes all the superstitions contained in the Book of Mormon, and the early revelations of Joseph Smith, Jr., and in the face of overwhelming evidence denies that Joseph Smith was

a polygamist. Its members do not believe in nor practice polygamy, but everything *distinctive* in their creed is antagonistic to Christianity, and the Book of Mormon and early revelations as held by them are the same mixture of superstition, fiction, and cunning which underlies the Mormonism of Utah.

DOWIEISM.

John Alexander Dowie was born in Scotland. *Early career of Dowie.* He studied a little while in some departments of Edinburgh University, went to Australia as a clerk, was a sort of lay evangelist in a Congregational Church, and later became a pastor. He is a born ruler and is a good speaker,—except when vanity renders him ridiculous or anger makes him venomous and reckless. While in Australia he avowed certain peculiar doctrines, one of which is that all disease is of the devil, and that, as Christ came to destroy the works of the devil, the right kind of faith will lead Christ to expel disease. He created much excitement, and many professed to be healed of their diseases. When he had made enemies by attacks upon the Churches, and had had trouble with the courts of justice,

and (he says) being called of God to a greater work, he left Australia and came to California. There he preached, and claimed that healings confirmed his mission. Those who were lame and walked after he laid hands upon them endorsed his claims and sounded his praises; but those who did not recover kept silent, as is the case with those who take "cure-all" patent medicines and patronize quack doctors. When he appeared in California he was willing and anxious to coöperate with the Young Men's Christian Association and the various Churches, but they soon found that he was too erratic in doctrine, too self-glorifying in spirit, too extravagant in speech and in magnifying his cures.

*Arrival and
career in
Chicago.*

Not meeting with the success or reverence he desired, he came to Chicago, where he showed financial ability, attracted much attention, opened a bank, and maintained what was practically a hospital. For ordinary use he bought an old church in an eligible location, and hired the best halls for special occasions. The afflicted went to him and declared themselves healed; but not a few died, while many went away neither better nor worse than when they came. The deaths, the spread of contagious disease among his adher-

ents, the rumors of neglect of, or scant courtesy to, the incurables, caused opposition which he fed by attacking prominent men, institutions, and Churches, denouncing them without stint, making statements he could not prove, and often exaggerating those having a basis of truth. He impeached motives and developed a vulgar style of speech, which disgusted a large part of the community. He was drawn into the courts, but having abundance of money employed skillful counsel, and continued in his boisterous and winning way.

Chicago, however, had made itself as disagreeable to him as he had made himself to Chicago; and, having with consummate shrewdness secured a fine site, he built a city, established manufactories, and made, in fact, a large amount of money by sales of leases of lots, and on paper an immense amount more.

His first serious rebuff was being condemned by the court to pay his brother-in-law about one hundred thousand dollars, which the latter claimed he had obtained under misrepresentations and non-kept promises. His next was the humiliation of having his property placed for a time in the hands of a receiver, at the suit of multitu-

Dowie's later career and prospects.

dinous creditors. Signs of sedition among his followers, deaths of his members because of lack of proper medical treatment, the death of his own daughter from burns, and other things, have pointed to the final collapse of his more than gaseous but less than solid enterprise.

Some of Dowie's absurdities.

He declares himself the prophet who was to come in the spirit of Elijah, professes to have had revelations, has appointed apostles—himself the first—and in many respects has paralleled the development of the Mormon hierarchy. For the last few years he has traveled extensively, making disciples here and there, and seeking to allure the wealthy. In New York he presented a spectacle of vulgarity, conceit, and blasphemous pretension which disgusted his audiences. But to his own people he represented his visit to New York as a grand success. In England also he failed.

His career demonstrates his claims false.

There is no reason to believe that his prayers have special power with God; the God of all mercy and consolation will hear the honest prayers of his devotees. That his doctrine concerning the origin of all disease is false can be proved by the Bible and science; that if it is true he had not the faith he boasted, is proved

by the fact that he cannot "raise the dead," or "speak with other tongues," "give sight to those born blind," or "heal all that come," as did Christ and the apostles. In his general preaching he teaches morality and divine worship with vigor and consistency. He recommends economy to his votaries, yet lives and moves and has his being in luxury; preaches humility, yet displays extreme arrogance; and if one foot is planted on the rock of faith, the other is on the quicksands of superstition.

Dowie is no prophet; he bears no relation to Elijah, and is merely one of the long list of "false apostles."

SANDFORD AND HIS SAINTS OF SHILOH.

Frank W. Sandford is well educated, and as a minister had two pastorates, one in Maine and one in New Hampshire. While in the latter he became a seeker for sanctification, and believed that he attained it. He traveled around the world, and, concluding that heathen are increasing in number faster than Christians, conceived the notion that he was commissioned by God to effect great changes in the Christian world. Having returned to this country, he went to his

*A recent out-
break of un-
bridled fa-
naticism.*

native town, where he has built upon a sandy hill an immense edifice. There he erected a "Tower of Prayer." Eight years ago a disciple was stationed in the tower, under instruction to set his face toward Jerusalem and pray two hours. From then until now the disciples have succeeded one another in the "Tower of Prayer," being relieved every two hours, day and night. According to an article of great interest and value in *Leslie's Monthly*, by Mr. H. F. Day, of Lewiston, Maine, there has been but one lapse among those who prayed in the tower, and this was caused by a weary woman being overcome by sleep. According to the same authority, who knows all the facts, Sandford declares that "God talks directly to him." One day he stopped in a speech to the saints and said, "God has just told me to start for Jerusalem. I shall go to-night." He started with a disciple, the two having only \$11.14. Three months later he returned, and stated that he had never lacked for money; while he was absent contributions came in for the buildings and the needs of the saints.

During his travels he induced many to help him; a house worth fifteen thousand dollars was given to him in England. (England is a par-

adise for magnetic fanatics, and has been for ages.)

The peculiarities of Sandford and his devotees *Strange an-*
may be summarized as follows: They fall into *tics.*
religious ecstasy, a sort of catalepsy, in which they become unconscious and often rigid. Women and children sometimes fast seventy-five consecutive hours. When funds are exhausted or any kind of trouble comes, they think that "the devil has appeared in person." To meet such cases they repair to the "Tower of David," which is the "Armory." From the walls they take bucklers, shields, and weapons, and "sally forth, Bible in hand, to drive the devil off the hill." After a while they feel that he has gone, although they do not profess to see him depart. They do profess to cast out demons. Mr. Day testifies that he has seen disciples writhing as if in epileptic fits. Sandford says that he has known "as many as half a dozen demons to inhabit one person." The members of the fraternity allege that they raised from the dead a woman named Olive Mills. She affirms that she was thus raised, and describes what she saw of heaven.

The saints spend the greater part of their time

*How "the
saints" live.*

reading and studying the Bible, and have no other text-book. Sandford or one of his elders harangues in the temple continuously. On every Thursday the community fasts the whole day. As all the disciples work in domestic matters, there is not much labor for any one. Sandford calls the system "coöperation," but he is the sole authority, makes laws, makes plans, and disposes of the funds; he selected wives for some of his elders, and they were compelled to take them. Notwithstanding his professions of "divine leading," he is spectacular, and apparently is not above the practice of humbug. In the autumn a boiler was needed to heat the temple. Maine is a cold state, and the temple on a high hill. Mr. Sandford gathered the saints before the altar, where they prayed six hours. At the end of that time "the boiler was seen coming up the hill, drawn by twelve oxen."

*Prolific in
vagaries.*

That he is mentally unstrung, though not irresponsibly so, appears from the following facts: After a second journey to the Holy Land he announced that he had new light on baptism, and though all the people had been baptized once, he made them follow him to the river and be immersed again. He has been tried in the civil

courts for cruelty to children and for manslaughter. The first charge was that he compelled his own son, a boy about seven years old, to fast seventy hours! He was found guilty. A second charge was that owing to a similar enforced fast another child died, and this was the basis of the charge of manslaughter. It being claimed that the people of that section were so prejudiced that he could not have a fair trial, he was tried elsewhere. On the trial of the second case the jury disagreed. Eight were for conviction and three held out for acquittal, while the twelfth was ready to agree with either party if necessary to a verdict. He was then tried in Franklin county and convicted. The case was taken to the Supreme Court on exceptions. Twelve of the Maine boards of trade and forty townships have petitioned the legislature to investigate the affairs of Shiloh. Sandford declares that God has promised to give him an ocean liner to help him establish "Holy Ghost and Us" stations around the world.

The Rev. N. H. Harriman, a Baptist clergyman, an alumnus of Harvard University and of Bangor Theological Seminary, an earnest Christian, heard of Sandfordism when he was residing

*Testimony of
an escaped
victim.*

in Tacoma, Wash. Believing it to be an "ideal Christianity," he went to Shiloh with his family. In September, 1903, he published his first article, informing the public of what takes place at Shiloh under the claim of the highest Christianity. In that and other publications he furnishes abundant evidence that Sandford is either insane or extremely wicked, capable of fiendish cruelty to those who doubt his unreasonable claims, protest against his inconsistent actions, or refuse to obey his tyrannical and inhuman commands.

After much correspondence and a careful weighing of the facts, I have been forced to the conclusion that he is not irresponsible, and should be punished for his crimes, and that state supervision should intervene to protect minors and persons plainly dominated by unlawful methods.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

*Mrs. Eddy's
origin and
early life.*

This collection of contradictory ideas and equivocal and ambiguous phrases should be known as "Eddyism," but has been shrewdly dignified by the incongruous and misleading title of "Christian Science." The organization was undoubtedly founded by Mrs. Mary Baker G. Eddy, who at the time of the copyrighting of

the book "Science and Health," in the year 1875, did so under the name of Mary Baker Glover, and in copyrighting it again in 1885, having in the meantime married Mr. Eddy, did so under the name of Mary Baker G. Eddy. She is a native of New Hampshire, and is now about eighty-three years of age. Her parents were respectable, and she had opportunities for a fair education, which in general were then not the best for women; but her brother had a good education, and she represents that he taught her much.

In her early life she was an invalid, and it is stated on good authority that she was hysterical, and she claims to have been subject to certain chronic maladies. Modern spiritualism arose in this country in 1847, and she coquetted with it, but claims not to have believed it. Magnetic healers were numerous, and she resorted to them for relief. She also studied a little of the homoeopathic school of medicine, and about the year 1862 went to Portland, Maine, and took treatment of a certain Mr. (known as Dr.) P. P. Quimby, who was a mesmerist and healer. This was an epoch in her life, for Quimby impressed his views upon her very strongly. She

alleges that for three years she retired from the world and communed with God, and that he revealed to her the system of faith and practice now termed by her "Christian Science."

This, however, is not the whole case. Whether she communed with God at all is doubtful; whether she thought she did is uncertain; whether she did or not, it is certain that she did not find her system in the Bible or receive it by revelation of God, for the essence of it she derived from Dr. Quimby. For three years after those in which she claimed to receive Christian Science from God, she lived in Stoughton, Mass., and there she taught Mrs. Sally Wentworth, with whom she resided, the root ideas that she subsequently put forth, and allowed Mrs. Wentworth to copy a document which Quimby had given her, and this copy Mrs. Eddy corrected in her own handwriting in two or three places. She also told the whole family that Dr. Quimby was a great man, and that she got her ideas from him. The Wentworth family are reputable citizens, more than ordinarily intelligent. After revealing all these facts, which were known to many persons in private, Mr. Horace T. Wentworth published an article in the *Boston Transcript*,

*An omitted
portion of
Mrs. Eddy's
"Life."*

stating the facts. This article I saw, and, accompanied by the Rev. Dr. Chaffin, for the last thirty years pastor of the Unitarian Church at Easton, Mass., a few miles from Stoughton, called on the family, whom he knew, examined the documents, and had extended conversations with one of the family who during that period was an amanuensis for Mrs. Eddy, and with the youngest daughter of Mrs. Wentworth, who was almost Mrs. Eddy's constant companion. Subsequently the documents possessed by the Wentworths and the history of Mrs. Eddy's stay in Stoughton were published by the *New York Times*.

In course of time Mrs. Eddy went to Boston and set up a college of metaphysical healing. When she called her system Christian Science it at once elicited some attention; it attracted among others Joseph Cook, then a widely known lecturer and defender of orthodox Christianity, and Dr. A. J. Gordon, a noted Baptist minister and pastor of Tremont Temple, Boston.

By her conversation she beguiled these gentlemen into believing that she was a Christian with unusual faith, a sort of Madame Guyon; but they soon discovered that her views on almost

*Mrs. Eddy
finds a
“college” in
Boston.*

every subject were entirely at variance with the teachings of Christ and his apostles, and were therefore compelled to come out over their own signatures, repudiating her notions and her "Christian Science," declaring that they had found her system neither the one nor the other.

*Her genius
for mystifi-
cation.*

She has displayed great power of mystification, marvelous ability in leading people to believe that she has something deep to be made known to the initiated, and equally marvelous financial skill. She produced that collection of disconnected thoughts, doubtful theories, questionable facts, and sibylline articles known as "Science and Health," and copyrighted it. She founded a "church," required every member to buy a copy of "Science and Health," and forbade each and every member or reader to expound or comment upon it. She forbids preaching, and compiles all the readings for her "church," which are from the Bible and "Science and Health." Should there be a second service on any Sunday, it must be an exact repetition of the first.

It will be seen from the following quotations from "Science and Health" that Mrs. Eddy's distinctive views are that God is not a person, matter

not a reality, but "a delusion of mortal mind," and that mortal mind causes "the delusion that man is sick, or maimed, or hungry, or faint." Sin also is a delusion of mortal mind. Prayer to God to do anything in answer thereto is not permissible, and neither medicine nor hygiene are necessary or of service in either preventing or removing disease. Unless it is believed to be so, neither fasting nor much eating is beneficial or injurious to health.

"God is supreme; is mind; is principle, not person."

*Mrs. Eddy's
half truths
concerning
God.*

"Infinite impersonal Mind is the Creator."

"God is Mind. He is Divine Principle, not person."

"Immortal Mind is the only Cause and impersonal Principle."

"Cause does not exist in matter, in mortal mind, or in personality."

"Prayer to a personal God affects the sick like a drug that has no efficacy of its own, but borrows its power from human faith and belief. The drug does nothing because it has no intelligence. It is faith, not Divine Principle, that causes a drug to—apparently—heal the sick."

*Mrs. Eddy's
idea of
prayer.*

"If we pray to God as a person, this will pre-

vent us from letting go the human doubts and fears that attend all personality."

To fasten her unchristian notions upon the words of Jesus she thus twists the Lord's Prayer:

"Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Thy supremacy appears as matter disappears.

Give us this day our daily bread;

Thou givest to mortals the Bread of Life;
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

Thy truth destroyeth the claims of error.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil;

And, led by the Spirit, mortals are delivered from sickness and death."

Her view of matter and the human body.

"Mind is all and Matter naught. . . . Matter seemeth to be, but is not."

"Erring mortal views misnamed Mind produce all the organic and animal action of the mortal body."

"Divine science shows that matter and mortal body are the illusions of human belief which seems to appear and disappear to mortal sense alone."

“Electricity is not a vital fluid, but an element of mortal mind,—the thought essence that forms the link between what is termed matter and mortal mind. Both are different strata of human belief. The grosser stratum is named *matter*. The more ethereal is called *human mind*, which is the nearer counterfeit of the immortal *Mind*, and hence the more accountable and sinful belief.”

Her theory of electricity.

“The act of describing disease—its symptoms, locality, and fatality—itself makes the disease.”

Her theory of disease, poison, and wounds.

“I have discerned disease in the human mind, and recognized the patient’s fear of it, many weeks before the so-called disease made its appearance in the body. Disease being a belief,—a latent creation of mind, before it appears as matter,—I am never mistaken in my diagnosis of disease.”

“Human mortality proves that error has been ingrafted into both the dreams and conclusions of material and mortal humanity.”

“You say that indigestion, fatigue, sleeplessness cause distressed stomachs and aching heads. Then you consult your brains, in order to remember what has hurt you, when your remedy lies in forgetting the whole thing: for matter has

no sensations and the human mind is all that can produce pain."

"You say a boil is painful; but that is impossible, for matter without mind is not painful. The boil simply manifests your belief in pain,—inflammation and swelling; and you call this belief a boil!"

"If a dose of poison is swallowed through mistake, the patient dies while physician and patient are expecting favorable results. Did belief cause this death? Even so, and as directly as if the poison had been intentionally taken. . . . The few who think a drug harmless where a mistake has been made in the prescription are unequal to the many who have called it poison, and so the majority of opinion governs the result!"

"The fear of dissevered bodily members, or a belief in such a possibility, is reflected on the body, in the shape of headache, fractured bones, dislocated joints, and so on, as directly as shame is seen in the blush rising to the cheek. This human error about physical wounds and colics is part and parcel of the delusion that matter can feel and see, having sensation and substance."

"Every sort of sickness is a degree of insanity; that is, sickness is always hallucination. This

view is not altered by the fact that it is not acknowledged or discovered by everybody."

Mrs. Eddy's theory of insanity.

"There is a universal insanity, that mistakes fable for fact throughout the entire round of the material senses; but this general craze cannot shield the individual case from the special name of insanity. Those unfortunate people who are committed to insane asylums are but well-defined instances of the baneful effects of illusion on mortal minds and bodies."

"A bunion would produce insanity as perceptible as that produced by congestion of the brain, were it not that mortal mind calls the bunion an unconscious portion of the body. Reverse this belief, and the results would be different."

"Ossification, or any unusual condition of the bones, is as strictly the action of mortal mind as insanity. Bones have only the substance of thought; they are only an appearance to mortal mind."

"This woman learned that food neither strengthens nor weakens the body,—that mind alone does this. True mortal mind has its material methods of doing it; one of which is to say that proper food supplies nutriment and strength to the human system. She learned also that

Mrs. Eddy's theory of food, exercise, and baths.

mortal mind makes a mortal and sickly body, because it governs it with mortal opinions."

"Because the muscles of the blacksmith's arm are strongly developed, it does not follow that exercise did it, or that an arm less used must be fragile. If matter were the cause of action, and muscles, without the coöperation of mortal mind, could lift the hammer and smite the nail, it might be thought true that hammering enlarges the muscles. But the trip hammer is not increased in size by exercise. Why not, since muscles are as material as wood and iron? Because mortal mind is not producing that result in the hammer."

Nor is rest after exercise or hard work of any benefit. She affirms the inefficiency of hygiene, and proceeds: "You would not say that a wheel is fatigued; and yet the body is just as material as the wheel. Setting aside what the human mind says of the body, it would never be weary any more than the inanimate wheel. Understanding this great fact rests you more than hours of repose."

Bathing and massage for health purposes only perpetuate a delusion, for Mrs. Eddy says, "Bathing and rubbing to alter the secretions or remove

unhealthy exhalations from the cuticle receive a useful rebuke from Christian healing."

The first and general prescription is, "Besiege sickness and *death* with these principles and *all will disappear*." She must, however, have become somewhat skeptical quite early, for in answering a critic she said: "I have never supposed that this century (the nineteenth) would present the full fruits of Christian Science, or that sin, sickness, and death would not continue for centuries to come; but this I do aver, that as a result of my teaching old age and decrepitude will not come as soon."

How to remove the delusions of mortal mind.

A specimen of her own method of "besieging" is this: "What if the lungs are ulcerated? God is more to a man than his lungs; and the less matter we have, the more immortality we possess. . . . If the lungs are disappearing, this is but one of the beliefs of mortal mind. Mortal man will be less mortal, when he learns that lungs never sustained life and can never destroy God who is our life."

She also states that Christian Science finds "the decided type of acute disease, however severe, quite as ready to yield as the less distinct type and chronic form of disease," and "handles the

most malignant contagion with perfect assurance." To provide for emergencies, she says: "If patients seem the worse for reading my book, this change may either arise from the frightened mind of the physician or mark the crisis of the disease. Perseverance in its perusal would heal them completely."

Science will not acknowledge her.

In the foregoing statements Mrs. Eddy contradicts natural science, common sense, universal experience, and the teachings of the Scriptures. She has treated half truths as though they were the truth and the whole truth, and has intermingled with such half truths errors of fact and religious and scientific untruths, the whole being adapted to infatuate the half educated and some of higher attainments who do not understand that her "cures" are explicable upon natural principles.

The Bible knows nothing of her notions.

Mrs. Eddy claims to base her system on the Bible. But neither the Old Testament writers nor Christ, his apostles nor the evangelists, ever spoke of sickness as though they had the least knowledge of such notions as those of Mrs. Eddy; but spoke always as they would have done had they heard of her theory and knew it to be false.

In the Old Testament Elisha the prophet is represented as dying of a lingering disease. The words are, "Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died." Hezekiah the king was extremely ill, and, according to the Scriptures, Isaiah the prophet prayed to God for him, and also applied a plaster of figs as a medicine, which plaster God blessed.

In the Second Book of Kings, first chapter and second verse, is this statement: "Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber, and was sick." He sent to "inquire of Baal-Zebub the God of Ekron" whether he should "recover of this disease."

The Second Book of Chronicles, sixteenth chapter and twelfth verse, has these words: "And Asa in the thirty and ninth years of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great." The same book states that God sent a plague on Jehoram; this was the proclamation: "Thou shalt have great sickness by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness day by day." Thus "God smote him with an incurable disease."

The effects of improper food in causing sickness are mentioned in Proverbs. "Hast thou

found honey? Eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it."

The benefits of exercise are thus stated: "The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep."

The following passage shows that by the holy men who were inspired to write the Sacred Scriptures the medical value of wine and strong drink, in some cases as a stimulant and in others as an opiate, was known and acted upon. Proverbs xxxi. 6: "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more."

*The New
Testament
knows nothing
of her
fancies.*

In the New Testament the diseases with which those who came for relief to Christ and his apostles were afflicted are named and described, and the healings are spoken of as though both health and disease are conditions of the body, the one as real as the other.

It was Christ who said, "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick." To Christ it was said, "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick"; and he replied, "This sickness is not unto death." The Good Samaritan

“bound up the wounds” of the man who had fallen among thieves, “pouring in oil and wine”; —those things being chief medicines in use among the Jews.

The account of the sickness and death of Dorcas and all the circumstances show that they had no such ideas of disease as are taught by Christian Scientists.

St. Paul speaks of the effects of drunkenness and gluttony at the holy communion, where that festival had been carried to such an extent that he says, “For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.”

Paul’s sufferings and weakness and painfulness are described, and especially his “thorn in the flesh”—and his prayers to God three times that it might depart.

The prescription by Paul to Timothy, that he should “drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake and thine often infirmities,” is plainly medical.

Another remark of Paul’s shows how little sympathy he had with such views as those of Mrs. Eddy: “Erastus abode at Corinth; but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.”

The words of Paul concerning Epaphroditus

are also to the point: "For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick. For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow."

Paul evidently knew nothing of Mrs. Eddy's half truths, and would have included them with the "old wives' fables," against which he warned the disciples.

These are given only as examples. All Christ's cures and those of the apostles were instantaneous, or practically so.

Had not Mrs. Eddy put forth her healing system as a religion, it would scarcely have been heard of, and she would merely be classed with quacks and charlatans; and her religion would not have attracted much attention had she not put it forth as a healing system.

That Dowie, Sandford, Simpson, Mrs. Eddy, etc.—although they maintain silence about their failures, greatly magnify the ailment with which their subjects are afflicted, and never refer to relapses—can claim recoveries among their adherents, is undeniable.

Recoveries from actual illness can be explained

*Accounting
for their
"recover-
ies."*

without attributing any specific efficacy to the theories they teach. When they pose as authorized Christian teachers, they have the advantage of the faith that exists in Christians. When any one declares himself to have invented a new theory, if it is positively asserted and plausibly defended, he has the influence of the strong instinct of the human mind to hear or see something new or mysterious. And when this receives some attention, the pretense that it is but a revival and amplification of pure Christianity will silence the scruples of those who hesitated to break with the Church. Some of the most successful of religious swindles have been thus propagated.

All forms of alleged healing without medicine or attention to hygiene derive some advantages from the fact not known, forgotten, or insufficiently estimated, that many diseases are self-limited. In such cases if the patient possesses staying power until the disease has run its course, he will recover under almost any treatment, or none. Pneumonia and typhoid fever are in the class of self-limited diseases. All forms of quackery, physical or mental, have the benefit of the vital force of the patient, which is the

real curing power. Some persons have already taken altogether too much medicine, and often medicine not adapted to their situation. When these, if not already doomed, comply with the order of the mind-curer, the faith-curer, or the Eddyite, to cease the use of medicine, by so doing they give the *vis medicatrix naturæ* an opportunity to save them from further physical deterioration.

Without doubt many think themselves ill when they are not so. These respond to the suggestions of mental healers; the hysterical can often be thus healed. Many need only encouragement to shake off the sub-invalidism, which without such stimulus would continue indefinitely. Thus it is apparent that any system of healing may show a large percentage of recoveries.

The power of the mind over the body is great, and therein lies the power of suggestions. People can think themselves into illness, and others can be talked into a serious sickness. In like manner they can be benefited by words and by their own thoughts.

Their common limits.

But to all these there is a limit. Dowie and the other anti-medicine healers in the name of Christianity, and Mrs. Eddy, exhibit no suprem-

acy over pagans, spiritualists, magnetizers, Mormons, or mind-curers; and they have the same limitations as to the diseases they cannot heal, and injuries they cannot repair. They cannot perform the mighty works attributed to Christ and his apostles. He cured the epileptic and the lunatic, the blind received sight, the lame walked, the lepers were cleansed, the deaf heard, and the dead were raised up. The "withered hand" was restored, not by the slow process of a change in the circulation, and gradual change in nutrition followed by structural alteration, but was instantly made "whole like the other." He made the "maimed whole," and when one of his disciples struck off the "right ear" of a servant of the high priest, Christ "touched his ear and healed him." Mrs. Eddy and Dowie are but "nature's journeymen" dishonoring Christ's name by their claims.

Mrs. Eddy organized her believers with adults mostly young or in middle life, and there were for some years very few deaths; but Christian Scientists have lost by death fully the average number. Such is the case when clubs are formed or mutual insurance companies in which each member pays a fixed sum when a death oc-

*Time came
for full
average of
deaths.*

curs. For some years deaths are few and there is little for each survivor to pay; but later, as deaths increase and survivors decrease, the payments sometimes bankrupt the organization.

Christian Scientists are found as patients in all the large hospitals. A number of healers and readers have died, some in horrible agony, from diseases which might have been checked had they been properly treated; and the press with increasing frequency chronicles the deaths of Christian Scientists.

*The logic of
facts en-
forcing con-
cessions.*

By the course of events Mrs. Eddy has already been compelled to make such concessions that all except the self-hoodwinked must recognize a growing lack of confidence on her part and the public in her theories. These concessions are: That surgical cases at her behest are left to regular surgeons, allowing them to decide whether anæsthetics, stimulants, or astringents are necessary. Obstetrical cases are also left to thoroughly educated physicians.

Healers no longer have her approbation in attempting to treat contagious diseases. They did attempt this with "complete assurance," but disaster overtook them so often as to arouse public indignation. They are now instructed to have

in readiness a regular physician to certify of *what disease* those die with whom their theory and practice have been unsuccessful. And when (after a reasonable time) the patient seems to be growing worse, and the Scientist seems unable to dispel the "error of mortal mind," Mrs. Eddy advises that the healer inform the patient or his family of the fact, and if he or they so choose a physician may be called.

It is always wise and right for Christians to pray for those whom they conscientiously desire to recover. God can answer such prayers in various ways without a miracle. He has constant access to the minds of the patients, relatives, physicians, and nurses. Some physicians by tone, manner, and words can encourage a patient to such a degree that the circulation of his blood, his digestion, and his respiration are favorably affected, and this may change sinking into reviving.

But if man can do this, what may not the ever-present Spirit of God accomplish? Also God, without a miracle, by influencing the thoughts of all interested, may cause suggestions to arise from which may come healing treatment which might not have been thought of otherwise. That He

The true doctrine of prayer for the sick.

in whom we live, and move, and have our being can, without infracting the superficial order of the universe, directly restore a sick person,—the result appearing to have come through natural causes,—is a proposition that no one can disprove, although from the nature of the case no one can demonstrate it.

Christian faith is simple and consistent. Each true believer may say, “God is a loving Father. He knows my deepest need. I strive to obey his laws in nature and in grace. I pray to him, in love and trust, that he will give me that for which I pray, or strength to bear the deprivation of that which I wished and prayed for, but now see was not needful or best for me.”

The object of presenting this record of superstition, fanaticism, and imposture is to emphasize the predictions of Christ and his apostles. No class of false “prophets,” “apostles,” “Christians” escaped their prevision.

New distortions and false forms of Christianity will arise where Christianity is formal or corrupt. They will appear wherever prayers for the sick show that pastors have no faith that God will restore in answer to prayer, and when the preacher has naught to offer in consolation but

stoical maxims and poetical sentiments. When one generation loses faith in true religion, the next will be ready for extravagant conceptions of the supernatural. No one, therefore, should be alarmed when a spurious religion arises.

Indeed, one of the strongest proofs of the divine origin of Christianity is that—although impeded and scandalized by such impostures and fanaticisms, which take the name of Christianity—it has maintained itself through the ages, and still with vigor presses toward its ideal; and, as true believers hold, toward its destined goal—the spiritual conquest of the world.



VI.

THE INDESTRUCTIBILITY OF CHRIS-
TIANITY.



VI.

THE INDESTRUCTIBILITY OF CHRISTIANITY.

THERE are convincing reasons for believing that Christianity will never perish from the earth, but that it will spread throughout the world, superseding most other religions; and, in those which maintain their ancient names, in vital points it will cause an assimilation to itself.

The structure of Christianity rests upon the religious nature of man, that instinct of faith, aspiration, and hope which springs eternal in the human breast, the foundation on which all religions rest. The sense of freedom of choice is the measure of the feeling of responsibility, and the consciousness thereof is the basis of conscience. Each human being feels that he is free to choose. He is not less sure that he is free than that he is alive, or that he is afraid, angry, joyful, hopeful, or intends to speak the truth. When men intentionally perform an act, or determine to perform one, they are conscious of power to decide otherwise.

Basis of Christianity.

All recognize the difference between the sane and the insane. They treat the sane as free, and praise or blame, respect or despise, punish or reward, accordingly. The relation of husband and wife is based upon the self-knowledge of freedom, and the recognition of it by each in the other: likewise those between employer and employee, ruler and subject. Every man who professes to believe in necessity and irresponsibility is obliged to talk inconsistently. There is no language formed for any but those who believe themselves free; and it is because the consciousness of freedom is imbedded in every human breast that "conscience doth make cowards of us all."

The religious nature of man, at its best, yearns for the recognition of God and for a sense of recognition by him; longs for the privilege and power of communing with him; for knowledge and guidance; for strength and consolation; for relief from the sense of sin and deliverance from the fear of death. In order to determine whether an alleged revelation is genuine, it is essential to keep in view wherein consists the need of a revelation from God. All who recognize the

need will agree that it must meet the following conditions:

Its source must be supernatural.

*Conditions of
a true reve-
lation.*

It must be true to the permanent and universal religious needs of human nature.

It must account for apparent contradictions in its declared principles, and afford an adequate support under the operation of those contradictions.

It must render unhappy, men without virtue, and sustain them in efforts to secure or regain it.

It must impart to each believer internal evidence of everlasting conscious existence and happiness, and the elements of that happiness must be seen to be in harmony with the spirit and principles of the revelation.

It must be adapted to human nature in all kindreds, tribes, and tongues.

It must raise up successive generations of witnesses to its truth who shall be propagandists of the faith.

Upon the assumption, therefore, that man must and will have religion, the God of Christianity, once enthroned in the human race, will remain.

His spirituality overthrows *materialism*. To

The spirituality of the God of Christianity.

define *spirit* may defy human ingenuity, but is not more difficult than to define *matter*; and there is as much evidence of the existence of something which is *not* matter as there is of something not *spirit*. They are to be classified among things which are understood, but can neither be defined nor described in human language. “God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”

The unity of God.

His unity antagonizes and expels polytheism. His invisibility shatters every idol and overthrows every altar. His providence places prayer on a rational basis, and gives each servant of God evidence of a sure support.

It might be possible at the present time for one to accept atheism if compelled to choose between that and polytheism; but against the unity, omnipotence, omniscience, invisibility, and eternity of the one God, few but distorted minds or depraved hearts could permanently react.

The personality of God speaks in every page of the New Testament, and he whose soul is saturated with its truths has no more doubt of God’s personality than he has that he and his fellow-men are persons.

The religious nature of man finds its best and

only *true* affinity with one God of heaven and earth, revealed in the Christian Scriptures.

The law of God as revealed in Christianity is *The law of God.* the righteous expression of his will, obedience to which is necessary to the welfare of man. Its foundation principles are, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." This is the only true key to the problem of an intelligent and free creature's relation to his Creator. Surely the Creator owns the creature, and the latter owes existence and all possessions primarily to the Creator. God is love, and therefore supremely lovable. The creature, realizing this, should cleave unto him, not alone under the pressure of duty, but in response to the promptings of gratitude and the attraction of pure love. This makes the whole individual life the outgrowth of a principle ingrained in the heart and conscience.

The creature must look to the Creator for light as to his duty toward his fellows, and he has graciously condensed them into one all-inclusive command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "Love worketh no ill," but all good. Hence only beneficent actions and institutions

can flow from it. With these principles all the specific precepts and commands of the Christian religion are in harmony; and as men can perceive that the welfare of mankind depends upon the prevalence of these principles and obedience to them, they will not be forgotten nor be without examples and witnesses.

The world will never relinquish the "golden rule," which cannot be preserved unless men are pervaded by the spirit of love to God the Father of all. Universal experience has shown the truth of the affirmation that "man will never say, 'Our brothers on earth,' unless he first says from his heart, 'Our Father who art in heaven.' "

*The corner
stone of
Christian-
ity.*

The incarnation and atonement of the Son of God form the corner stone of the Christian structure. Without this manifestation of himself, the Christian system would contain nothing which could impress and save the world. Of God's feelings toward his earthly creatures they could have no certain demonstration, and, depressed by conscious imperfection and laden with sins, they would sink into the slough of despond, and the light of hope would disappear from their souls. But with that amazing act of condescension in view, the guilty may hope, the fainting

expect strength, and the righteous pursue their "high calling of God in Christ Jesus" with ever-increasing confidence.

The necessity and efficacy of the incarnation and atonement of the Son of God are seen in every heathen sacrifice, which is an attempt of the religious instinct to obliterate the pain of conscious guilt and to placate a righteously indignant God.

Every pleading, despairing cry of a genuine penitent is a testimony to his need of a Divine Saviour. And the peace wrought by the Holy Spirit, together with the reforming power of faith in the "only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," "once offered for all," furnishes an internal demonstration to those who possess it; and—so long as they retain it—their lives are a constant witness to the source of their inspiration.

The regenerating power of the Holy Spirit in the world demonstrates the truth of the Bible, to the souls of those who are regenerate, so clearly as to render the Christian comparatively independent of human aids to faith. Christians are not taught to undervalue learning, nor—though warned against undue love of them—to

*God's mani-
festation to
the soul.*

despise earthly possessions ; for these are capable of being accessory to the spread of the gospel ; but the mightiest effects of Christianity have often been wrought without learning, wealth, or culture. Men who knew but one thing, whose only testimony was that of the "blind man," "Whether he [Christ] be a sinner or no, I know not ; one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see," have sometimes exerted an irresistible moral and mental influence over even the learned ; and philosophers who have listened unmoved to the keenest logic, to glowing rhetoric or profound disquisitions, have been persuaded to yield their hearts, by humble men and unaffected women who testified in meekness and "in much trembling" to what God by his Spirit had wrought in and for them. The influence also of the Holy Ghost, once experienced, in aiding men to reach the highest conception of virtue possible to finite natures, to resist temptation and endure persecution, has the moral force of a miracle. So that those who preach the gospel proclaim not only a system of pure truth and the conditions of peace and pardon from God, but a spiritual power of which every man may be conscious, the fruits of which he may see in his

own life, and to which he can testify fearlessly whenever asked "a reason of the hope that is in him."

The privilege of prayer, and its supports in Christianity, are presented as in no other religion. God is revealed as a loving Father; and when the heart, conscious of imperfection, mourns under the recollection of sins of neglect and of direct wickedness; when darkness and gloom exclude the light of hope, the exceeding great and precious promises appear on every page of the Sacred Writings, adapted to every possible situation, thus preventing the total loss of hope. The sane man who prays never commits suicide, never flees from a recognized responsibility, never resorts to desperate measures of an unholy nature to right his wrongs or to revenge them. When all else fails, prayer remains, an antidote to despair.

The world will never cast away the hope of conscious and blissful immortality which Christianity offers. A scientific study of human nature does not afford a satisfactory answer to the question, "What fate awaits us when we die?" The physical universe makes no response. The stars are cold; the sun itself decays. The world

The Christian conception of prayer.

The hope of eternal life.

listens for voices from the unfathomable depths, and, as it listens, becomes conscious of a silence that chills the soul. But the note of Christianity is jubilant: "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die"; and "though he were dead, yet shall he live." "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

The world will never turn permanently away from a religion that declares, "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."

The most noteworthy fact relating to Christianity and immortality is not the confident and jubilant tone in which Christ and the apostles speak of personal immortality (though that tone is found nowhere else), but the testimony to its certainty by communion with God. The logic is simple, but strong. God who speaks in the soul would not inspire such confidence and joy to deceive;—nor is this all: a sense of permanence pervades the mind, and the perpetual flow of feel-

ing allows no note of earthly mutations or contingencies. It is not that the Christian reasons that he will live forever. He does indeed so reason, but in addition he feels it.

Not only is the promise of eternal life an element in the perpetuity of Christianity, but its warnings, especially those which reveal the fact of retribution after death, are equally essential in maintaining a sense of its truth. Those who regard its teachings upon the subject of punishment an impediment to its progress misunderstand human nature and misread or misinterpret the teachings of the New Testament and the history of the origin and growth of Christianity. Those who believe in a just God cannot admit the possibility of a situation in which sin and holiness will receive similar treatment at his hands. Christianity is as clear in its declarations in regard to punishment as it is in respect to reward; yet in various periods this principle and all the truths related to it have been misrepresented.

It was long taught that the Father of all is not equally solicitous that all shall be saved. It has been held by a few that infants and pagans will be accounted sinners, and as such suffer eternal punishment. But these views are now sel-

*The fate of
the unright-
eous.*

*Misrepresen-
tation of
Christ's
teachings
concerning
the doom of
the wicked.*

dom avowed ; they are considered unchristian limitations of God's love.

For some decades in the last century it was strenuously taught that all mankind, whatever their lives on earth may have been, will be saved and enter upon the heavenly state at death. Those who believe in universal salvation, but are unwilling to accept the foregoing view, have maintained that the future state is a mixed one, where the unrighteous will have opportunities for reformation superior to those afforded in this life ; and that one by one they will improve those opportunities till all shall be made holy. None of these views are found in the New Testament, nor can they be harmonized with the words or spirit of Christ.

Of infants Christ said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven" ; of those who have not the law St. Peter by inspiration said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons ; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Hence every responsible being, Jew or Gentile, pagan or Christian, who truly repents of his sins and walks in the light which he has received, whether greater or less, will be saved.

“No man can number” the finally saved; for, including all sinless infants that have died; all children who have died before they were sufficiently developed in intellect and will to make so momentous a decision; all men of every race and religion who have walked as nearly in harmony with the light they have as Christians are required to walk; and all the fully enlightened and faithful servants of the ever-living God, of every name, they must comprise the vast majority of the human race.

*Vast number
of the saved.*

Thus a religion which begins by convincing men of guilt and preaching remission of sin to the repentant; and in connection therewith promises to those who keep the faith the blessing of God while they live, and after death life everlasting—at the same time warning men of danger—meets all the spiritual wants of the normal mind. From such a religion, wherein duty, hope, fear, and love unite, mankind can never wholly turn away. In certain periods fear has had disproportionate dominance; in the present era hope may be unduly exalted; but wherever the warnings have been no longer heard, or are feebly uttered, the influence of Christianity has waned. That a dark shadow is thrown by Christianity

over the destiny of a portion of the human race has been the opinion of a vast majority of Christians, nor does it seem possible to remove it except by methods which would destroy the credibility of the revelation if applied to other parts thereof. Christ's teachings of the dark side do not obscure the dominant note of good will to men. The charge that it is ignoble to serve God from fear or from hope is lightly made. The function of fear is to arouse a sleeping conscience; of hope to inspire an elevated ambition; and both take a minor place in human thought and feeling when the heart is filled with love to God and the spirit and life are controlled by a high sense of duty. Even to such exalted spirits, so long as the flesh infolds them the warnings of the gospel no less than its promises may instantly become vitally important. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall," and let every one "work out his salvation with fear and trembling." It is this necessity, demonstrated by the long line of generations, which justifies the initial declaration that Christianity as a religion among men depends largely upon its denunciations of sin and its warnings to all men to repent of their sins and thus escape the judgment of God.

*Christianity
and the per-
manent
things of
earth.*

It is pertinent to the subject to trace the fibers which incorporate Christianity with the forces that rule the world. That it is the religion of Great Britain and Ireland, France, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Russia, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, the United States, Canada, Mexico, and the South American states, is sufficient to show that it is incorporated with the powers that rule the world. No doubt in some of the countries named it exerts a divided influence; but in the least developed it is the only religion, and it is not possible that another can take its place. Unbelief and atheism may temporarily overrun a land, but after a time in that very soil the religious nature of man will manifest itself in an astonishing manner. Conclusive instances of this have been seen in the history of mankind.

Christianity is identified with the education of the world and with the doctrine of the equality of man. Whatever may be said of some aspects of scientific investigation, it is incontestable that there is nothing incompatible between the pursuit of science and the most devout and earnest Christian living.

*Christianity
and modern
civilization.*

Modern civilization has gone hand in hand with

the development of Christianity. Whether or not Christianity produces civilization,—or at least is not incompatible with it,—its identification with the forces that rule the world is apparent.

A judicial estimate of the relation of Christianity to modern civilization is that it is the chief factor therein; and that other great factors have generally wrought in harmony with the fundamentals of Christianity, although sometimes with considerable friction.

Propulsive power.

The propulsive power of Christianity in the hearts of its votaries has never been permanently equaled by any religion whose principles committed it to peaceful measures of propagation. When men come to a knowledge of the truth they find themselves in the possession of the greatest good. Under such circumstances parents can find no peace until their children have obtained like precious faith with themselves. Nor can children rest without trying to lead their parents into a like inestimable experience. None who really know the joys of true Christianity can be indifferent to the religious condition of their friends, or even of others whom they may frequently meet. Their personal relation to Christ, their knowledge of his commands, their desire to

do his will, will prompt them to strive to draw others to Christ; while the promises which encourage them to such efforts render it impossible for one in whose soul the holy fire is burning to do otherwise than kindle the flame in other hearts.

The supposition that Christianity is false carries with it consequences so awful that the world will shrink from entertaining it. If it be false, no other system of faith can demand a moment's attention; where it exists, it is therefore *this* religion or *no* religion. Systems of philosophy are contradictory and without means of authentication. Nature is inadequate to reveal the chief moral attributes of God. If there has been no definite revelation, the most spiritual and elevating precepts are without divine sanction; the most noble examples are dreams; the life of Jesus becomes incredible, except as a conception of genius.

It cannot be rationally supposed that such religion can be rooted out from among men. Those who live exclusively in "the high and dry light of the understanding" have neither the motive nor the power to influence men, for men are governed by their hearts as well as by their

If Christianity be false?

minds. One truly zealous Christian naturally will do more to lead others to Christ than ten average opponents of religion will do to propagate the barren principles of unbelief. The manner of the representation of God's truth to men includes sentiments, characters, and tragedies which the world will never allow to pass out of its memory. That religion can never die which contains the parable of the Prodigal Son, the parable of the Good Samaritan, the history of the penitent thief, and Christ's prayer on the cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

*Optimism the
Christian's
privilege.*

There is no ground for fear that Christianity will ever cease in the earth. When it was first preached the Jews fought against it, and theirs was the most vital and persistent faith which the world had seen; with undying tenacity it holds its votaries in nearly every country in the world. They crucified the Founder of Christianity and pursued to death his disciples. The whole power of Rome, the Iron Empire, the mightiest the world had seen, was turned against Christ in the interest of paganism and philosophy; for hundreds of years the conflict waged, and millions sealed their faith in their blood.

Christianity survived the shock, and gave warrant for the now trite saying that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church," for the whole empire became professedly Christian.

Every science, at its birth, has been employed *The sciences.* by some to antagonize Christianity. Astronomy, almost the first of the sciences, was destined to "pluck it up root and branch"; many of the professors of Christianity seemed to deny or ignore the solar system and the rotation of the earth. Astronomy proved it. And though Christian leaders did and said many things which they ought not, Christianity survived; and ages afterwards the great astronomers, Kepler and Copernicus; the discoverer of gravitation, the illustrious Newton; and the father of modern science, Francis Bacon, however inconsistent in his practice, were Christians.

Archæology also was expected to undermine seriously faith in the Bible, but instead thereof Christianity has derived extraordinary support from the labors of these patient students and explorers, some of the most celebrated of whom are devout Christians.

Soon after its origin as a science, geology was arrayed against the Bible by certain experts. To

find contradictions of the Bible in the rocks of the earth, it was necessary first correctly to interpret the rocks, correctly to interpret the Bible, and correctly to compare the two, a work still incomplete. Were this accomplished, and the Bible proved to disagree with the records in the rocks, it would have no more effect upon the vitality and supernatural origin of the spiritual truth taught therein than the finding of baser ore in connection with a rich vein of gold or silver would affect those precious metals.

If evolution leaves a place for the original creative act of a personal God, and for a manifestation in Christ such as evolution never made, there is no conflict between evolution and Christianity. But if it has no place for a personal Creator, or for Christ, as something more than man, to the believing Christian it must be an “opposition of science falsely so called.”

Those who fancy that Christianity cannot survive the materialistic, pantheistic, or agnostic tendencies of the age forget the influence of the Holy Spirit in general awakenings. These phenomena are facts of the first magnitude. When the evangelical movement arose in England in the early part of the eighteenth century, skepti-

*The regeneration
of the
eighteenth
century.*

cism was rampant and religion a jest; the Established Church was sleeping; the dissenting communions were neither numerous nor active; but the rise of Methodism without and within the Established Church of England, the impetus given to other dissenters, and the general return of the people to religious lives, are facts which receive more and more recognition from history as years accumulate.

Circumstances in the last one hundred and fifty years are alike instructive and confirmatory: the rise of French infidelity, and its attempt to root up Christianity in France, are unwilling witnesses. That movement had high-sounding and attractive shibboleths, "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity." And to these it added a hatred of a corrupt form of Christianity. It beheaded the king, shut up the churches, and wrote over the cemeteries, "Death is an eternal sleep"; it even set itself to take from the calendar the beneficent Sabbath, and extirpate reverence for any belief in God. For a century this attempt had been preparing, but what was the end thereof? The Revolution was suffocated in its own blood, and Christianity still exists in France and has to be reckoned with in all political and social calcula-

*The failure of
French in-
fidelity.*

tions. The disofficializing it by the French government is likely to increase its activity and moral power.

*Its failure to
make this
country
anti-Chris-
tian.*

In the time of the Revolutionary War the seeds of French infidelity were planted in this land. Thomas Paine actually believed that the "Age of Reason" had come, and that the Bible, and especially the incarnation and atonement of Christ, would soon be rejected; and, in his vanity, thought that Christianity would be uprooted,—and for a time it seemed to many as though such might be the result.

Independence put an end to ecclesiastical domination, and many of the churches were torn in pieces in the Revolution. But what has been the issue? In no other country of the world has Christianity prospered as in the United States. The various Churches have above thirty million communicants and adherents, including more than two-thirds of the population. Here both Protestantism and Catholicism flourish as nowhere else in the world.

We were told that Spiritualism would supersede the gospel, and that the Church would die; it has been but a few years since those boastings; its believers have diminished, its mediums furnish

to some a puzzle, and to others amusement, but by the vast majority are looked upon with contempt.

Against these and the growing independence of spirit, and under a republican form of government, Christianity as a growing force and an ever-increasing missionary propaganda has been maintained in the world by man's need of consolation, as well as by its adequacy to meet his conscious wants, by the zeal of its followers, by the simplicity and efficiency of its organization, by the hunger and thirst of man for something beyond material possessions and sensuous gratification, and by the power of the Holy Spirit.

In the early part of 1889 I spent some time at Athens, and as the English-speaking residents and travelers were of the opinion that a religious service in English had never been held on Mars Hill, an informal committee was raised to arrange for an undenominational meeting on the following Sunday at four p.m. Areopagus is one of the few sacred places which have never been monopolized by the Jews or by either of the two great divisions of Christianity (the Latin and the Greek) which have disputed for the possession of the Eastern world. Though close to the

A religious service in English on Mars Hill.

Acropolis, and very near to the Pnyx, the ancient place of assembly, it is as bare as any desolate hill in the most remote part of the country. Before the days of Pericles the Acropolis was the religious center of the city, and from Mars Hill can be seen most of the ruins that have made Athens the wonder of the world and its model in architecture and sculpture. Only a few yards away is the Parthenon, "the chief glory of Athens and, even in its ruins, the most perfect specimen of Greek architectural genius." On the north side of it lay the market place. It was scarce five minutes' walk from the market where Paul disputed with the Jews and the philosophers, and it is generally agreed that probably on the side of the hill toward the market Paul delivered the sermon recorded in the seventeenth chapter of the book of Acts.

No publicity was given to the fact that a service was to be held, except the distribution to the guests at different hotels of information as to time and place. At the appointed hour a congregation in which were represented England, Scotland, five states of the Union, Canada, and seven different religious denominations, had assembled. At a short distance stood two Greek priests who,

with mingled reverence and curiosity, looked upon the congregation and listened to the songs, the prayers, and the discourse, remaining until the apostolic benediction,—practically the same in all forms of Christianity,—was pronounced.

Three Christian communions were represented by those who conducted the exercises. Principal Bancroft, of Andover Academy, a minister of the Congregational denomination, read the Scriptures and offered the first prayer. The closing prayer was made by Mr. Mills, a member of the Society of Friends, and at that time President of Earlham College in Indiana. The delivery of the sermon was allotted to me.

*Interdenomi-
national
services.*

The voices reached the Parthenon, and when the assertion was made that “not one human being remains to worship the gods in whose honor the Parthenon and the magnificent temples and monuments whose ruins are gilded by the setting sun, were erected—not one!” a wholly unpremeditated effect, more impressive than anything else said or sung, was the slow-answering echo, from the Parthenon, “Not one.”

When Paul preached, “some mocked; and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. So Paul departed from among them. How-

beit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them."

Its history a prophecy of permanence.

That religion must by its inherent forces continue as long as the human race remains, which has survived the attacks of the Jews, the assaults of the Roman Empire and all other ancient empires into which it was introduced, and (though not incompatible with true philosophy and genuine science, or lacking defenders among philosophers and scientists) has suffered many things of many philosophists and scientists who unscientifically classified with facts and principles their inadequately supported theories, and has endured the foolishness of many over-certain theologians, and fantastic thinkers assuming that venerable name, and has thriven equally well under monarchical and republican forms of government.

What Christianity claims for itself, its history, though often marred by the errors, imperfections, and sins of its votaries, confirms.

"Wherefore we receiving a KINGDOM WHICH CANNOT BE MOVED, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."

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